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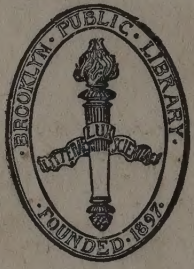

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DRAMATIC AND PROSE MISCELLANIES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
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DRAMATIC

AND

PROSE MISCELLANIES.

BY

ANDREW BECKET,
AUTHOR OF "SHAKSPEARE'S HIMSELF AGAIN," ETC.

EDITED

BY WILLIAM BEATTIE, M.D.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

A NEW EDITION.

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LUCIANUS REDIVIVUS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

——— Dialogue, that great and powerful art,
Now almost lost, which the old Grecians knew,
From whom the Romans fainter copies drew,
Scarce comprehended since but by a few;
PLATO and LUCIAN are the best remains
Of all the wonders which this art contains.—*Buckingham.*

THE following Dialogues were first suggested by the opinions of Dr. Samuel Johnson, as set forth in "The Adventurer:"—

"There are many modes of composition," says he, "by which a moralist may deserve the name of an original writer:—he may familiarize his system by dialogues, after the manner of the ancients, or subtilize it into a series of syllogistic arguments; he may enforce his doctrine by seriousness and solemnity, or enliven it by sprightliness and gaiety; he may deliver his sentiments in naked precepts, or illustrate them by historical examples; he may detain the studious by the artful concatenation of a continued discourse, or relieve the busy by short strictures and unconnected essays.

"To excel in any of these forms of writing will require

a particular cultivation of the genius; whoever can attain to excellence will be certain to engage a set of readers whom no other method would have equally allured; and he that communicates truth with success must be numbered among the first benefactors of mankind."

This is undoubtedly true: and Johnson might have said of the dialogue writer, not only that he may enforce his sentiments "by seriousness and solemnity, or by sprightliness and gaiety," but that both these methods may be employed by him in one and the same production; and that, in so doing, he will be the more likely to compass what he had intended,—that is, at once to instruct and to please; and thus, instead of particular and partial commendation, obtain the suffrage, the approbation, of all.

It must not be imagined, from the title given to this work, that the writer is vain enough to think of placing himself on a level with LUCIAN. No,—he is only ambitious to be considered a pupil, who has not studied in vain, in the school of so great and distinguished a master.

LUCIANUS REDIVIVUS.

DIALOGUE I.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

Frederic II. King of Prussia, *and* Machiavel (*meeting*).

Mac. Ha! is it Frederic the Great, of Prussia, whom I thus fortunately meet?

Fred. The same: the man, who, ambitious as he acknowledges himself to have been, and justly pleased with the illustrious title "the Great," and which indeed particularly characterizes the *hero*, is yet infinitely prouder of the more honourable distinction of "the Good."

Mac. A pattern for princes, both as a statesman and a warrior; but it is in your legislative talents, in the rules and ordinances so wisely established for the happiness of your people, that you are particularly entitled to praise. It is there that you may be said to rise "above all Greek, above all Roman, fame."

Fred. This is a language I should not have expected from Machiavel. How greatly the sentiments change with a change of condition or of place!

Mac. This remark applies not to me; my sentiments were the same, when I had the unhappiness to herd among men.

Fred. You were then a great deceiver, if I am to

judge from your writings, and one of an extraordinary kind. A man has seldom the ambition to appear unamiable: to be considered as cruel and perfidious, or attempt to render others so, when he is really and entirely the reverse. When atrocity is seen among princes, it is not, I believe, from precept or example that it usually proceeds.

Mac. What then is to be apprehended from my work? But you still are wandering by a false and illusive light. Your majesty's imagination, warmed by a love of human nature, serves but as a luminous vapour, to lead you from the beaten way: but this I had frequent occasion to remark, when I was so unfortunate as to be mingled with the living crew.

Fred. Again, an unqualified censure, a bitter invective against your fellows! a general reprobation of human kind!

Mac. I have, perhaps, been somewhat too general in my censure. Man, as he is formed by nature "noble in reason,—infinite in faculty," I must sincerely love; but man, as he is changed by education, "crafty and insidious,—selfish and brutal," I must utterly despise. In a word, I am enchanted with *mind*, as it is an emanation of the Divinity, but loathe it as it is warped by policy and worldly desires. But you have said that I attempted to render men cruel and perfidious; and this you have pronounced of me, from a view of my writings; you were then of the common opinion, that I really meant to lay down instructions to monarchs, in attaining to wickedness; while I actually strove to deter then from it, by holding up a picture to the world, of all who had been the pests of their time.

Fred. Your performance, then, was a satire on princes:—was meant, under the masks of panegyric and seriousness, to expose to derision and contempt the men who had abused the power with which they were invested; and who, intoxicated by that power, had impiously set themselves up for gods.

Mac. I marvel that your majesty had not sufficient acuteness to discover this on the perusal of my work. I no more intended to teach a prince to become the scourge of human kind, than did the poet to recommend roguery, when he says—

> Be a rogue and prosper;
> For he who acts with mankind on the square,
> Is his own bubble and deceives himself.

Fred. You express a surprise at my want of penetration in not discovering the drift of your performance. Voltaire, however, you may remember, conceived of it as I have done: he says, in his preface to the Anti-Machiavel, "La Houssaie prétend que Machiavel haïssait la tyrannie: sans doute tout homme la déteste; *mais il est bien lâche et bien affreux de la détester et de l'enseigner.*"

Mac. Voltaire, as the editor of your refutation of my "*Prince*," was under the necessity of talking thus, whatever his real sentiments on the matter might be; for unless he admitted that I was a teacher of tyranny, your majesty's labours were of no effect.

Fred. The dedication of your book to L. de Medicis has led to the belief that you wished to be the preceptor of princes, and establish their power. Your expression is somewhat remarkable: "If you read my performance with attention, you will find how desirous I am that you should *become secure in that power*, to which your great and shining qualities might well raise you."

Mac. The censure which has fallen on my performance, proceeded either from the having studied me by scraps and quotations only, or from a total misconception of my design. It has, indeed, been maintained by some, that I should not at any time have set forth the wickedness and tyranny of princes to view; as others, who might possibly be virtuously inclined, would, from a love of power, and from the successes of these princes, follow them in their blood-stained path, regardless of that which alone can lead to real and permanent glory; but this

their conclusion is forced and unnatural. If it be true, that—

> Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,
> As, to be hated, need but to be seen;

the more faithful my representation of that monster, the more should I be commended as the lover of my kind.

Fred. After all, then, there is nothing to censure but your manner; had you barely recounted the vices of princes, had you only exposed them to the view of the multitude, your representations would have been thought no more blameworthy than those of Sallust, Tacitus, and Livy, who alike have painted, in striking colours, the misdeeds of the tyrants who had infested the earth. It is only from your having, apparently, reduced cruelty into a system, that so many have been loud in condemning you: and it is unfortunate for your reputation, that you gave an account of the barbarities you now affect to detest, in the form of maxims and precepts, and not as a plain and simple narrative of facts.

Mac. That would have defeated my own purposes. I humoured the propensities of the men whom I wished to advance my fortune, and succeeded according to my wishes. When you took up my writings for examination, you should have attended to the absolute tenor of them. It is not to be the advocate of vice, to say that flagitious proceedings will, much sooner than honourable actions, conduct the ambitious to the summit of power. In every age, the perpetrator and abettor of "glorious" crimes has been generally more successful than the practiser and preacher of "peaceful" virtue. Juvenal, you may remember, has said—

> Wouldst thou to honours and preferments climb,
> Be bold in mischief, dare some mighty crime,
> That dungeons, banishment, or death, deserves;
> For virtue is but faintly prais'd, and starves!

Fred. I cannot but express my concern, that I should have stigmatized you, in my writings, as the teacher of tyranny. For as I have made a conspicuous figure on

the theatre of Europe, and been distinguished as a king, a general, and a politician, my opinions will have no little influence on the minds of men.

Mac. What may be said, either of your opinions or of mine, matters not. That the meaner villain may not have the power to "monster it," there will be found, in every part of Europe, "strict statutes and most biting laws." With respect to the potentate, he will generally be influenced in his conduct by his passions, and by the circumstances which may chance to environ him. In the present enlightened state of the world, he is not, as in ancient times, dispassionately and systematically the enemy of man; if he be naturally ferocious and cruel, he is obliged to stifle the criminal propensities, either from a principle of policy or fear. The rights of humanity are now too firmly established to be shaken by him: the modern tyrant,—a Nero or a Caligula, would be of very short existence indeed.

Fred. You are right in your concluding remark; we have lately seen it in the tyranny, the anti-monarchical tyranny, attempted to be established by the several demagogues of France.

Mac. Ha! is it thus you speak of the men whom many consider as having realized Plato's idea of a perfect government, when he says—"Happy must those countries be, where philosophers become kings."

Fred. He adds, I believe, that the people will be equally fortunate "when their kings shall become philosophers;" and this he has observed, as being, in either case, precisely the same. He felt that a certain goodness of heart, which belongs particularly, though not indeed exclusively, to the philosopher, would fit him for a just and equal rule.

Mac. I pretend not altogether to justify the evasions and subterfuges of princes, though I cannot but acknowledge that there is often a necessity for them; they seem to belong as much to the political ruler, as stratagem to the military man. *Les ruses de guerre*, as exhibited by

the celebrated Pusyguer, were, if I mistake not, always admired, and even studied, by you. *Les ruses état*, if I may be allowed the expression, must, in like manner, be cultivated by the monarch who would wish to preserve to himself the advantages gained by his arms; but on this matter Montesquieu will be the conqueror's guide; or, perhaps, he may be better instructed by attending to the conduct of the "demagogues" of France.

Fred. But tell me, did I really appear to you to be the king-philosopher of Plato, during my certainly not inglorious reign? or was it merely a touch of flattery? Were you only practising a little in your art, when you hailed me, awhile ago, as an example and a model for kings?

Mac. Wherefore think you I should flatter? I stand not in need of advancement now. No! I have spoken nothing but truth, plain and unornamented. Among statesmen and law-givers, you will ever hold a distinguished place,—witness the *Code Frédéric;* while for valour and conduct in war—

Fred. Hold! I advert not to military exploits, but simply to the ordering and regulating of the state: did I appear to study the good of my people? Was I the kind and beneficent governor of all?

Mac. Unquestionably. The wise man, I have observed, is ever a good and a beneficent one. Fools alone are insensible to the miseries of mankind. You were acknowledged, on all hands, to be well deserving of the several encomiums bestowed on you by Voltaire, in his less splenetic moments; he, who knew so thoroughly to appreciate your merits. With the strictest justice, you were styled the father of your people: where can the monarch be found, who is so well entitled to the glorious, and at the same time the amiable, designation as yourself? The man who in quarrelling with you exposed some of your foibles,—foibles such as humanity will ever have,—who threw about the shafts of ridicule in a wanton

manner,—was yet compelled to be candid there. I well remember his words; "Son père avait logé à Potzdam dans une vilaine maison: il en fait un palais. Ses soins se tournèrent à embellir la ville de Berlin, à faire venir des artistes en tout genre; car il voulait aller à la gloire par tous les chemins. . . . . Les choses changeaient à vue d'œil. Lacédémone devenait Athènes. Des déserts furent défrichés: cent trois villages furent formés dans des déserts desséchés." Thus we see—

> The desert smil'd,
> And Paradise was open'd in the wild.

The benefits, the blessings, thence derived to the nation are sufficiently obvious. Here, I conceive, is to be seen the monarch's true and real glory. But warlike ambition is common enough with the youthful prince; your majesty must pardon me, then, if, in contemplating your military character, I exclaim with Montesquieu, in his view of the conquests of Alexander,—feeling the application to be just,—"What a soldier! what a conqueror! living, he is admired; dead, he is lamented by the people he has subdued!"

Fred. I am glad to find it the opinion, as well of yourself as of others, that virtue may, sometimes, be discovered in the man who is in pursuit of military glory;—a fleeting unsubstantial good, indeed, when virtue is not the prompter; for, like the disembodied spirit, it soon "flits," as the poet expresses it, "into air; into thin air!"

Mac. Such are the honourable sentiments of your majesty's disembodied spirit. You had, however, other ideas when on earth, and when engaged in the "filthy fray;" except, indeed, at the time of writing the Anti-Machiavel, while you were Prince of Prussia, and when the brilliancy of conquest was wholly unknown to you.

Fred. You would then insinuate that I was not always guided by a love of virtue.

Mac. I mean, at this time, merely to represent to

you, that you practised not, on every occasion, according to your precepts: and that, on the demise of your father, you were dazzled by the splendour of your situation as a powerful king. Montesquieu, who, in speaking of my work, has done me the honour to style me "Ce grand homme Machiavel," is precisely of the same opinion as myself, with respect to the necessity of dissimulation in the kingly character,—(perfidy and oppression we equally detest.) In describing a monarchy, and of honour which appertains to it, he has the following words. "It allows of cunning and craft, when joined with the idea of greatness of soul or importance of affairs: as, for instance, in politics, with whose finesses it is far from being offended."

Fred. Well, then, I must own I had occasionally some "compunctious visitings of nature" in my search after glory:—*glory*, I must say; for so, without ascending to principles, the meteor which floats and glitters around the head of the warrior will ever be styled by mistaken man. It is with the soldier as with the inamorato,

> — When success a lover's toils attends,
> Few ask if fraud or force attain'd his ends.—POPE.

Mac. Your majesty was born a soldier: you were not compelled to assume the character, as has been the case with others, by any circumstances whatever, which might affect the safety of your dominions. When you first took up arms, the neighbouring powers were in a peaceful state. I may now without hesitation observe, that you used very flimsy pretences for the war you engaged in against the empress-queen.

Fred. But how does this agree with your original assertion, that I might be considered as a pattern for the warrior and the king?

Mac. When I commended you in the character of king, it was in allusion to the civil arrangements of the state. When I spoke of you as a consummate general, it was from the brilliancy and rapidity of your victories. The motives which might lead you to unsheath the

sword are entirely out of the question, and wholly abstracted from your military skill.

Fred. The motives were, for the most part, ambition and interest. I may frankly confess them now.

Mac. You acknowledge them to be your instigators at the commencement of your wars, or Voltaire has foully misrepresented you. He asserts that you actually committed to paper the following declaration, and which, he adds, is faithfully transcribed by him. "Mon épargne bien remplie et la vivacité de mon caractère étaient la raison que j'avais de faire la guerre à Marie Térèse, Reine de Bohème et de Hongrie. . . . . Enfin l'ambition, l'intérêt, et le désir de faire parler de moi, l'emportèrent, et la guerre fut résolue." A very candid, but certainly a very singular acknowledgment for a monarch; it is, in fact, proclaiming yourself an oppressor. The war-declarations of kings are conceived in a totally different strain; as, "All the world knows that the moderation of his majesty," &c. or words to the same effect; and this is followed by an enumeration of the injuries and insults, real or imaginary, which he may have received, and which must justify him in taking up arms. But you will answer that this was only your closet confession, and not intended for the public eye. True; but still your injustice is equally manifest; for, in either case, the consequent odium will rest on your name.

Fred. The declaration said to be transcribed by Voltaire is an absolute forgery. Whatever ambitious views I may have had in some of my wars, it was not the case with that to which you allude; and this will appear by the manifesto I published at the time.

Mac. The liveliness of Voltaire's manner has always gained him a number of admirers. The ridicule he was pleased to throw on your majesty somewhat injured you in the world's opinion: since your residence in the Elysian fields, however, ample justice has been done to your character on earth. The aspersions of malice, the satirical traits of envy, which so often alarmed you, are

now little attended to; they are mostly consigned to the pit of oblivion.

Fred. Voltaire, indeed, has shown himself particularly malicious in his representations of me. Like to many men of letters who have been honoured with the notice of princes, he never thought himself sufficiently rewarded. He affected to slight me as a king, in the same manner as Cato is reported to have slighted Eumenes, king of Pergamus, on his coming to Rome.

Mac. The philosopher of Ferney possessed not the virtues of the Roman Censor. When it was asked of Cato, "Why do you thus shun Eumenes, who is so good a king, and so great a friend to the Romans?" he replied, "Eumenes may be a good king, but I know very well, that the animal called a king is a man-eater; nor is there one among the most renowned of them all that can be compared with Epaminondas, Pericles, Themistocles, or others whom I could name." And this he observed of these men, because virtue was known to have been the impeller, the first mover, in almost every action of their lives. But Voltaire had none of the rigidness and austereness of the ancients, and which were founded in moral goodness; his pretended scorn and contempt of royalty originated entirely in his pride, in his literary ambition. In his own imagination, his abilities placed him high above those who were styled his peers; higher, indeed, than the most illustrious potentate on earth. He seemed ready to exclaim, in the language of Shakspeare—"Here I sit, let kings come bow to me." Thus, I say, did he conceive of himself, and before any particular incense had been offered to him. But, when your majesty had exalted him into a god, reason, which till then had served to counterbalance arrogance, evaporated quickly; the scale flew up and "kicked the beam."

Fred. He yet was evidently pleased and gratified by the appointments he for some time held at my court, however unequal he might think them to his merits.

The golden key, the cross of distinction and honour, with which I invested him, had charms for even the haughty and philosophical mind.

Mac. But this, you should recollect, was in the infancy of his genius; there is something very dazzling in a royal throne. He must be of a highly philosophical temper, indeed, who can look with steadiness, and at the same time with indifference, on its splendour. Still, however, the passions and affections of Voltaire might have remained in a great measure like those of other men, had not your majesty, as I have just observed, unluckily erected him into a divinity. The Stoics themselves, when bestowing titles on their wise, their great, and supereminent men, were not more extravagant. What were keys and crosses, salaries and appointments, in the estimation of a divinity? This your deification of him, as I heard a candid Frenchman observe, *achevait de le perdre.* Ever after, indeed, he assumed a more than mortal bearing; and as Pindar, in his poetical raptures, talked of his head reaching the skies; so Voltaire, in his philosophical reveries, believed the same to be the case with himself.

Fred. You know him well; but allow me to finish the portrait:—then anticipating the earthly glories attendant on his *apotheosis*, (for such he no doubt expected should take place in form at his decease,) he from his imaginary empyreum

Looks down to pity kings;*

while, in his conceit, "the little stars," on the appearance of such a luminary as himself, must immediately "hide their diminished heads."

Mac. The *apocolocynthisis*,† as Seneca terms it, of the emperor Claudius, would, perhaps, be sooner adopted than the consecration you mention. But let me for a moment compare this celebrated moralist with yourself; the Roman philosopher preaches forgiveness, but

* "And the free soul looks down to pity kings."—Ess. on Man.

† Mock deification.

practises revenge. The philosopher of Sans Souci talks of vengeance, but exercises love.

Fred. In the first ebullitions of anger, in the paroxysms of rage,—I certainly pronounced of him, I deemed him an ingrate: but, in my cooler moments, I reflected on the vanity and irritableness so generally found in the literary character, and pardoned all.

Mac. A truly christian temper, whatever atheistical notions your majesty might entertain when in the world of men: but you received, I doubt not, the first *tinct* of irreligion from him by whom you have been attacked on that very head.

Fred. I am obliged to you for thus expressing your good opinion of my christian disposition, as you have already done of my lesser virtues. I have long banished from my remembrance, and given to the winds, the sarcasms, and the invectives, which were thrown out against me by the bitter M. A. De Voltaire. How far I am to be commended for this, or whether it accords with the doctrines set forth by the Saviour of the world, is not for me to determine. I shall rest content with producing a single passage from the writings of the scoffer himself. "I will only ask one question: Who has most religion, the calumniator who persecutes, or the accused who forgives?"

Mac. No proceeding can be fairer. "Out of thine own mouth shalt thou be judged." Thus says your majesty, and so entirely do all human resentments appear to have subsided in your breast, that should you chance, wandering in these happy groves, to meet this modern Theomachist, this literary Typhæus, you will, no doubt, hail him again as a friend.

Fred. Joyfully, as I would have done on earth. "Let not the sun," says the scriptural precept, "go down upon your anger."

Mac. Nothing can be more to your honour. "To err is human, to forgive divine."

Fred. You allow too much to me on the score of

forbearance. With the bodily form, I necessarily lose the prejudices and passions of man.

Mac. I allude to your conduct when in a state of trial, and not to inevitable consequences in this after-life. You had, by your own confession, divested yourself of prejudices and passions, before you put on incorruption; even then, you were evidently desirous of being ranked with immortals. This it is which places you so much above your peers; this, indeed, is true ambition; justly to soar above humanity, and aspire to the glories of a superior nature.—

> Ambition first sprang from the blest abodes,
> The glorious fault of angels and of gods:
> Thence to their images on earth it flows,
> And in the breasts of kings and heroes glows.

Fred. Enough of the malice and ingratitude of Voltaire. But you will acknowledge that my literary career was attended with fame;—not so great indeed as that acquired by my military skill, but yet sufficient to make me vain. It is certain, however, whatever may be imagined to the contrary, that the peaceful province of literature was far more agreeable to me than the clamorous field of war. That I was frequently engaged in battle, is true; that I fought for glory, is likewise certain; but I knew to temper that glory with a love of mankind. That I was not hurried on by a savage impulse, that I had not an insatiable thirst of renown, the lines in the exergue of the medal which I caused to be struck on the taking of Prague will sufficiently evince:—

> By war, O Lord, make wars to cease,
> And may this victory lead to peace.

Mac. Aut Cæsar aut nullus, yours was not, it must be owned, the common cry of princes. You possessed the extraordinary merit of being able to set bounds to your ambition; universal empire was not your aim: but, notwithstanding this your moderation, you have been grossly vilified by some. I should hope, however, that

the future historian of the yet far-famed Frederic, as indeed of every other distinguished character, will be guided in his representations entirely by truth. On this head, I shall adduce a passage or two from the writings of Plutarch, and which cannot be too frequently insisted on and recommended to the attention of the biographer. "As we choose that a painter, who is to draw a beautiful face, in which there is yet some imperfection, should neither wholly leave out, nor entirely express, what is faulty, because this would deform it, and that spoil the resemblance; so, since it is very hard, or rather impossible, to find a man whose life is wholly free from blemish, let us in the same manner follow truth, describing fully whatever is commendable; and, if any errors occur, which have been occasioned by the emotions of a sudden passion or the necessity of the times, let us look on them rather as defects of virtue than as vices, and carry the pencil gently over them, out of respect to human nature, which never formed a beautiful object that was complete and faultless, nor a virtuous character that was entirely free from blame." Such are the noble and generous sentiments of the Greek philosopher, who, still more to his honour, practises all that he advises in his work. But I must now bid you farewell, once more observing, that in almost every action of your life you have shown yourself deserving of the eminent title you bore. In fine, that you have, by an uncommon display of virtues and abilities, proved yourself, in the truest sense of the word, *a King*:* "Aye, every inch a King."†

* KING, of Konnen, *Sax.* to know;—by reason of the eminent knowledge and prudence with which we expect him to be endued.

† Shakspeare's *Lear.*

DIALOGUE II.

SCENE—AN OPEN COUNTRY.

MISANTHROPOS *and* LEVICULUS.

Misan. (*Enters repeating.*)

> Here do I,
> A dedicated beggar to the air,
> With my disease of all-shunn'd poverty,
> Walk like contempt alone.

Yet wherefore should I murmur: why appear dissatisfied? I cannot indulge myself, it is true, in any of the luxuries of life, but I still am able to furnish out the necessaries of it.—How lovely, how diversified is the prospect before me! Nature, in her gayest attire, smiling and rosy as a cherub, scatters forth her bounties on unthankful man. In contemplating the works of the great Creator, I feel lifted above the earth. How pleasing, how grateful, the sensation! I could, I think, be happy: nay, sometimes imagine that I am really so. But, alas! in the world's estimation I am poor. All men fly me, therefore, as they would contagion: all men shun me as a criminal of the blackest dye. This at one time produces mortification, at another it reconciles me the more to myself. "Who venerate themselves the world despise," says a poet of no little eminence. But I cannot entirely approve the sentiment. It exhibits an ostentatious humour, an arrogance dishonourable to the human character,—which should, after the example of our glorious Redeemer, be lowly and humble in spirit, doing good and eschewing evil. No; despise the world I cannot. It has done me wrong. But, thank Heaven! I can bear to be secluded from it; and learn to venerate myself.

Levic. (*Enters repeating.*)

> Bring with thee
> The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty.
> And if I give thee honour due,
> Mirth, admit me of thy crew:
> To live with her and live with thee,
> In unreproved pleasures free.

Ha! Misanthropos. Ever moping and musing. Were I not of the true Horatian, the right Anacreontic, disposition, thy melancholy would indubitably infect me, since I so frequently encounter thee in my walks.

Misan.

> The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears:
> Less pleasing far than virtue's very tears.

Thou art an enemy to melancholy: a decrier of the sublimest affection that can possibly infuse itself into the human mind, only from being a stranger to its celestial nature. Let it for a moment have possession of thy breast, and thou wilt fancy thyself lifted at once into the third heaven: into the empyreum of the immortals. How beautifully the poet, who felt the divine influence of which I speak in all its force—

> To the pure soul by fancy's fire refin'd—
> Ah, what is mirth but turbulence unholy,
> When with the charm compar'd of heavenly melancholy.

Levic. Well, I had always supposed that the melancholy Jaques was a creature of the poet's imagination; but I now find the character realized in the philosophical Misanthropos.

Misan. I am obliged to you for the compliment, however; for, to be a philosopher in the present temper of the world is somewhat to the honour of a man. I consider a calm and philosophical disposition as the first of human blessings. The most valuable of all mundane possessions is not equal to it.

Levic. I am of a different opinion. How can moroseness, sheer crabbedness, be considered as a desirable quality in any one?

Misan. This is not the character of philosophy. But hear, in answer, the most sublime among our poets—

> How charming is divine philosophy!
> Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose;
> But musical as is Apollo's lute;
> And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
> Where no crude surfeit reigns.

Levic. Well, well; I will leave to you, pedant as you are, your bookish dreams. Indulge your sombre inclinations to the full. Invite the "pensive nun" to attend you in your walks: she, "pale companion," is not for me.

Misan. Right. Thou art fitted neither by nature nor by education for her sacred converse; her saintly visage is far too bright for thy unsteady eye to gaze on. Indeed, the glories, the rays of divinity, that break from it are often too powerful for mortal sight. Hence the morbid melancholy of the fanatic, so frequently confounded with the healthful meditations of the philosopher; and which has brought the latter occasionally into ridicule and contempt.

Levic. But while you talk of the contempt which is thrown on philosophers, you are evidently inclined to hold all other classes of men as entitled to it in the most superlative degree. Still, however, if you suppose me an enemy to philosophy, you are much mistaken; but I am a follower of Aristippus, and not of Heraclitus. Austereness is a quality I could never affect. The evils of life are many; but they may sometimes be avoided. To court and cherish them shall never be mine.

Misan. You are still entirely in the wrong. Far, very far, is the lover of philosophy, of moral philosophy, —for the question here is not of physics,—far is he, I say, from courting and cherishing the evils of life; but he is enabled, by the cultivation of the science, to bear them with becoming fortitude. The true philosopher, you should remember, will bear, with patience, pains and calamities, under which the ordinary man would sink.

Levic. "I never yet found philosopher that could endure the tooth-ache patiently."* But it is not against the principles of philosophy, but the manners of its teachers, that I would chiefly declaim: it is not against the virtues of the science, but the vices of its professors, that I earnestly protest.

Misan. How! The vices of the teacher, of the professor, of ethics? I do not rightly understand you. Explain.

Levic. Willingly. Thus then have I ever observed of the man who is distinguished by the name of philosopher: a sovereign contempt of those with whom he is perhaps obliged to mix; and a great and high opinion of himself.

Misan. You were never more mistaken. *He* a despiser of his fellow men? No! were it not for their degeneracy he would consider the entire universe as his brethren and friends.

Levic. Indeed! I imagined that he who was desirous of living almost wholly abstracted from the world must necessarily hold it in contempt.

Misan. That must have arisen from your not having made a proper distinction between man in his natural, and man in his artificial state. In the first, or as moulded by the hand of the Deity, he is a virtuous and benevolent being;—for we may rest assured that evil propensities are not inherent in man, nor were they implanted in him by the Creator of the world. In the latter, or as he loses sight of reason and truth, he becomes a compound of hypocrisy and vice. In a word, we may be certain that whatever may be found offensive in his character is acquired, while all that we admire in it is the gift of Heaven. Now, as these artificials (if philologers will allow me to use the word substantively) are by much the most numerous class, you may easily imagine that the philosopher who long has contemplated the human race, must necessarily wish to fly from what had awakened his indignation and disgust.

* Shakspeare.

Levic. Certainly. He holds them in detestation and contempt, thinks them deserving of punishment, and punishes as far as lies in his power.

Misan. I am sorry you are so greatly inclined to sneer. But if by retiring from the world he were actually to inflict a punishment on it,—which, by the way, in its present corrupted state is far from being the case, —principle would at no time allow him to practise it. The friend of man seeks not to punish but to reform. In censuring the prevailing manners, I speak of the generality of mankind, depraved as they are, by a spirit of contention and too great a regard to worldly concerns. But know, that Truth, who with Justice has left the earth, is yet sufficiently regardful of her votaries. She sends into their bosoms her heavenly light; a light which I trust will once more shine on, and irradiate all mankind. For, as the planets after a certain course of time return to their primary stations, so will it be with the virtues; Saturnian days will again be seen.

Levic. What—

> an age of gold,
> When men and beasts divided empire hold.

Desirable times, indeed! And as it is said that in the reign of Saturn the rational and the brute creation had a language common to both, so we may imagine their manners were nearly alike.

Misan. The account of the language is absurd; and some other particulars related of the golden age are not perhaps more credible. But the beautiful description of it, as given by Virgil, has certainly nothing but what our reason may readily admit. I will repeat the passage to you out of the Æneid:—

> Primus ab æthereo venit Saturnus Olympo,
> Arma Jovis fugiens, et regnis exul ademptis.
> Is genus indocile ac dispersum montibus altis
> Composuit, legesque dedit; Latiumque vocari
> Maluit, his quoniam latuisset tutus in oris:
> Aureaque, ut perhibent, illo sub rege fuerunt,
> Sæcula, sic placida populos in pace regebat.

Levic. And you really imagine that times like those which are here described may again be known? Why, aye, we have only to remove a few trifling obstacles, and the business is done. We have only to divest men of their prejudices and passions; to convince them that great wealth, like a great book, is actually a great evil; that pleasures were never intended for a human being; and that it is better, as the preacher has told us, "to go to the house of mourning than to the house of joy." When this, I say, is effected, the days you could wish will undoubtedly return. When there is no cause for contention there certainly will be none throughout the world. For we must remember that men do not quarrel but for what they believe to be an absolute good. But then, you must bereave them of their passions and affections; for to suppose that, with these remaining, they will become what we desire; and that, too, from a love of honour, were absurd. Though honour is, or ought to be, a desirable attainment with mortals, yet to imagine that they will seek it, regardless of all earthly advantages, were to mistake their character greatly.

Misan. Alas! those interests,—those worldly interests! But notwithstanding the general pursuits of men, I will still believe, with the moralist, that virtue alone constitutes happiness:—"'Tis virtue makes a king."

Levic. Yes, if happiness can be said to dwell entirely in the mind, independent of all foreign, all adventitious circumstances. But this, I believe, is not the case. Horses and dogs will frequently confer it, while the goddess, whom you think so powerful in the matter, is labouring to little effect, or standing aloof in utter dismay.

Misan. And is this the being described by the immortal Shakspeare?—"What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god!"*—And shall all these noble endowments lie dormant in him?

* Hamlet.

shall they not rather be generally called into action? Shall not his reason, shall not his pride, arouse him to a proper sense of his importance? Can there be need of a public monitor to point out to him the dignity of his nature? Will he not assert, as well by deeds as by words, the portion of divinity that evidently belongs to him? Yes, assuredly he will. The time is not very distant when he will forego all superfluous enjoyments; when he will spurn at the petty distinctions which so long have separated man from man; and, finally, when he will assume the character and office which indeed is worthy of him,—that of steward and almoner of the "Most High;" *the only giver of glory.*

Levic. This is a language I should never have expected from the mouth of a misanthropist. These are extraordinary sentiments, indeed!

Misan. You think, I find, with the multitude, that the misanthropist must consequently be the enemy of man. A very erroneous idea! "He who is not a misanthrope at forty, says the erudite Chamfort, of the French Academy, has never loved mankind." This, however paradoxical it may appear to many, is certainly a just remark. He escapes not his species in hatred—as I before observed of the philosopher—but merely in sorrowing at their degenerate state. He quits society for injuries done perhaps immediately to himself, or for those which have been practised on the deserving few: truly virtuous and honest, he cannot endure even the sight of chicanery and deceit. The two-faced fellowship of the world offends him, and awakens somewhat of anger and resentment in his breast.

Levic. According to your definition, then, the misanthropist, like the philosopher, is actually the friend of his kind.

Misan. Certainly; and, in the truest sense of the word, the misanthrope and the philosopher must be the same. Absolutely unable to divert men from their follies, he can only bewail the infatuation by which so

many among them are lost. The sublime, the almost super-human Rousseau (I can never speak of him without rapture), in describing the misanthropist, observes of him:—"S'il n'y avait ni fripons, ni flatteurs, il aimerait tout le monde." ..... "Les vrais misanthropes sont ceux qui ne pensent pas ainsi; car, au fond, je ne connais point de plus grand ennemi des hommes que l'ami de tout le monde, qui, toujours charmé de tout, encourage incessament les méchans, et flatte par sa coupable complaisance les vices d'où naissent tous les désordres de la société." Now, he who thinks and feels with the citizen of Geneva becomes enamoured, as it were, with solitude, retires, and finds peace and comfort within himself. Whenever I read the following passage, my imagination figures to me the hand of a deity tracing the lines:—"Comme la Divinité tire tout son bonheur d'elle-même, les cœurs qu'échauffe un feu céleste trouvent dans leurs propres sentiment une sorte de jouissance pure et délicieuse, indépendante de la fortune et du reste de l'univers."

Levic. It has been observed, but I do not remember by whom, that "he who lives in solitude must be either a god or a wild beast."

Misan. Nothing truer was ever advanced of him. The god is seen in the citation I have just produced to you; the wild beast is he, who, guilty of some foul misdeed, and with passions still raging as before, is obliged to fly from the wrath of his fellow-citizens, to hide himself in some close retreat. In a word, to the virtuous, solitude appears an elysium of the highest resplendency; to the wicked, it is a Tartarus of the blackest hue.

Levic. Excellent! with regard to yourself, you certainly are not a wild beast. But, professing to be a lover of solitude, you could, no doubt, very syllogistically prove that you are therefore—but the *consequence* is pretty clear.

Misan. You would be hard upon me, I perceive, for the indirect encomium which I have passed on myself;

but you forget what Dryden has told us, that "conscious merit may be justly bold;" you forget, too, that, in affecting to disregard the force of reason, you only prove yourself an advocate for the latter academics, sceptics who are no longer heard; or, if heard, only to be ridiculed as they deserve. But, as we seem to have different notions as to the powers and the pleasures of the mind, I will farther acquaint you with the observation of Aristotle, who affirms that great geniuses are generally inclined to melancholy; that is, to abstractedness and intenseness of thought, instancing, in support of this, Socrates, Plato, and others.

Levic. Ha! do you thus early descend from your altitude? after boasting of supernal advantages, would you now compare yourself with beings of a terrestrial mould?

Misan. Man, whatever mental endowments may belong to him, has certainly nothing to boast of on that account; all that is good, we must remember, proceeds immediately from the Father of the universe: all is resolvable into him. Nor do I know that, properly speaking, individual excellence can be said to belong to any; the intellectual powers are perhaps originally the same in all men. You will tell me, however, that this is not altogether consistent with what I before observed, in speaking of conscious merit; but then it must be remarked that the merit here insisted on, is not to be understood of the qualities bestowed on us by the bounty of nature, which, I repeat, are possibly common to all, but to the cultivating and well applying of those qualities or talents, as well for the benefit of ourselves as for those among whom we live. Thus, for example, virtue, as it is the greatest boon of heaven, so the exercise of it is the most honourable to man, and of which he may honestly be proud; but then his pride must arise from the properly directing of it. Virtue, in some instances, is seen to border on weakness, nay, almost to degenerate into vice. We should likewise distinguish that which is

active from that which is merely of a passive or a negative kind; this is not a distinction without a difference, to talk in the language of logicians, for the difference is very considerable indeed.

Levic. But if mental perfections are, as you seem to think, naturally to be found in all men, *genius* is no longer a discriminative term: "'tis his, 'tis hers, 'tis free and general," in short, "as the casing air." But is this to be warranted by example; is this to be supported by facts?

Misan. You misconceive me greatly. I would by no means insinuate that mental *perfections* are alike to be found in all, but that the mental faculties or *powers* are perhaps the same. It is the employing, the throwing into action, those powers or gifts of nature, which constitutes what we properly denominate *genius.*

Levic. The *poeta nascitur non fit* of Horace will not then be admitted by you; for your sentiment holds, I presume, of poetry as of the other arts. You are clearly of the school of Helvetius. He has decided on this matter with boldness, but his assumptions will not be allowed, I think, by the world. Unfortunately, the proofs are yet to come. . . . . .

Misan. I speak but of probabilities: it is a case in which nothing can be adduced by way of proof. We are, it is true, acquainted with the general vigour of the mind; but then we know not its particular nature. To determine on the several properties of mind, and thence on its fitness for study, we must, if I may use the expression, resolve it into its first elements; we must have a thorough knowledge of its essential and constituent parts. But this attempt to analyze immateriality, whatever certain ontologists may have pretended, were equally laborious and vain. It is to roll the stone of Sisyphus, to fill the sieve of the Belides; neither can we ascertain the limits of the understanding. Great have been its exertions, wonderful the discoveries it has already made, and much may be yet to come. It must not, however,

be forgotten, that, powerful as our intellect may be, we still are finite beings. I therefore repeat,—its term, its resting point, we can never know. Have finite beings ever been able to decide on the extent and power of infinity? If any one can answer in the affirmative, then will the present question be no longer problematical; we can determine it at once without a pause. Still, however, I must contend for the possibility and even probability of what I have suggested to you; namely, the perfecting of those ideas, or principles, which are discoverable in us, and which by some are believed to be innate. The force of education is very great,—

> 'Tis education forms the common mind;
> Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclin'd.

But, even to establish my own opinion, I would not by any means encourage an inquiry like the present. It might lead men impiously to question the wisdom of the Deity, as they have already questioned his moral goodness in regard to the blessings and the evils of life; little considering that what they call blessings are possibly evils, and *vice versâ* of the ills.

Levic. This disquisition is not altogether to my liking; philosophical inquiries of any kind, indeed, are not very agreeable to me.

Misan. And yet (though I am as little pleased with the present examination as you can be) it is by means of them that we learn to live. It is told of Diogenes, that, some person having said to him, "I am not fit for the study of philosophy;" he replied, "Why then do you not die, since you are confessedly unfit to exist?"

Levic. How! would you then insinuate, because I declare against handling difficult and involved subjects, that I am therefore unworthy to breathe?—insinuate that I know not how to live? I who have had the honour to be a member of the *savoir vivre!* an Epicurean, too, and not know how to live! surely I do: aye, and

likewise to die with a suitable grace; without dishonouring my sect.—

> Puisqu'il faut que je meure,
> Qu'on m'apporte tout à l'heure,
> Le reste de mon poisson.—La Fontaine.

Misan. What! would you be born for animal gratifications alone? would you have existence merely to indulge in sensualities; in earthly pleasures and pursuits? Think but for a moment on the order of beings to which you belong. Think, I entreat you, on Him after whose likeness man was so happily formed. "God," says a celebrated ancient, "is entirely exempt from want; and, in proportion as the virtuous man lessens his wants, he approaches nearer to the perfection of the Divine Being."

Levic. But is not something allowable to the imperfection of our nature?—to the frail and fleshly constitution of man?

Misan. Possibly. But still we should not be too lavish in our grants; for what purpose, think you, has reason been given to us? yet something, you say, is to be allowed to the frailty of our nature. Man is composed of matter and spirit; I had almost said unfortunately composed, since they are often at war with each other; for the former, though it has a separate existence, is devoid of judgment (as we find by brutes), while the latter has that faculty for its very essence: and thus it is, that the affections of the soul and body are so frequently contending, in many, for the mastery. Not so, however, with the professed libertine; he is almost always a materialist, and to him the conflicts I speak of are consequently unknown. He acknowledges, indeed, that his actions are reprehensible in the sight of the world, but then he insists that man is little better than an automaton, a mere machine; it is in this persuasion that he acquits himself to his conscience, or at least apologizes for his errors and his crimes. Or, perhaps, on the principles of Fatalism alone, the libertine yet

maintains that nothing is dependent on self; that all is determined by an invincible necessity; that he is impelled to the ill for which he is censured by a blind and irresistible fate. This latter character, who abandons himself entirely to his vices, and who is really the pest of society, I must utterly despise. The former, who labours to conquer his vicious inclinations (and with whom I believe you may be classed), I shall always regard with some degree of pleasure and esteem; I shall always hope, too, that the issue of the struggle will be such as may redound to his honour. As I before insinuated, the seeds of virtue are sown in all; we are free agents; so that to encourage or to crush them in the growth must remain with ourselves.

Levic. You do not consider me as absolutely profligate, I perceive, though you think my heart is prone to follies which you cannot but condemn. You would, evidently, commend me greatly, were I to "throw away the worser part of it, and live the purer with the other half." In a word, were I to shake off all corporeal grossness, and become a kind of ethereal being like yourself; but, alas! as Belcour* observes, in the comedy, "My passions are my masters; they take me where they will." No! I shall never become indifferent to the joys of life, I shall never acquire the apathy of the followers of Zeno, and which they so loudly and impertinently boast.

Misan. But in steering clear of the Stoic's rock of insensibility, you fall into the Epicurean's gulf of intemperance. These are equally destructive to humanity, and he only can be accounted wise who comes not within the influence of either.

Levic. Well but, my dear Peripatetic, for of the school of Aristotle I presume you would be thought, I fancy we shall never be of the same opinion as to the *summum bonum* of life. Your *summum bonum* lies, if I may be allowed the punning expression, *in the absence of every*

* See the comedy of the West Indian, by Mr. Cumberland.

good; while mine is actually *to enjoy every good.*—All, in short, which nature and fortune have so kindly, so prodigally thrown in my way.

Misan. It does not, indeed, seem likely that we should ever agree in opinion as to the *chiefest good.* Here, then, let us break up our discourse. Pursue your pleasures, and repent.

Levic. So shall I be more acceptable in the sight of Heaven than will ninety and nine just men. Heh? Is it not so?

Misan. Cease, I entreat, from your profaneness: your repentance may otherwise come too late.

Levic. "All the proceedings of the world," says Erasmus, "are nothing but one continued scene of folly, all the actors being equally fools and madmen; and, therefore, if any be so pragmatically wise as to be singular, he must e'en turn a second Timon, and, by retiring into some unfrequented desert, become a recluse from all mankind." For myself, I am content to mingle with the fools and madmen of the world. To you, therefore, I leave the dominion of the desert and all its joys. Gladly do I bid you adieu.

Misan. Farewell! So shall my heart return to cheerfulness and peace. So shall it return to what the poet has happily pointed out as "best society."*—"*Le sage quelquefois évite le monde, de peur d'être ennuié.*"†

* Milton. † La Bruyère.

DIALOGUE III.

SCENE—THE BANKS OF THE RIVER STYX.

MERCURY, CHARON, *and a* MATERIALIST.

Char. BRING him along, Mercury, bring him along.

Merc. Why, so I would, but he denies my authority. I have found him a terrible plague; he says, forsooth, that we have no business with him, and that he is a Ma—— How do you call yourself, Mr. —?

Mat. A Materialist, Sir, and I maintain that your infernal judge has nothing to do with me.

Merc. What, you are at equivocation, are you? Well, but if he has nothing to do with *you*, that is with your *body*, he has something to do with your soul, your immortal part.

Mat. Soul! I have no soul, Sir.

Merc. No soul! why what the plague! Charon, do you hear the fellow?—but that quirk will not serve you now.

Mat. Yes, Sir, I repeat it—no soul, and I can prove it to you in the most philosophical manner.

Char. Prithee, let us hear him, Mercury. I like a little philosophy now and then; I am partly a philosopher myself.

Merc. Wonderful! Why, who can have made you a philosopher, Charon? I should never have suspected that.

Char. Where is the wonder, Mercury? I must, indeed, be insensible, if, after the infinite number of souls that I have ferried over the river, and the variety of characters that have presented themselves from Megapenthes to Mycillus,* they should yet pass to the

* Megapenthes, a tyrant; and Mycillus, a cobbler.—See *Lucian.*

dominions of Pluto, without awakening the powers of reflection in my breast.

Merc. Cry you mercy, old gentleman; I shall henceforth honour you as you deserve. (*Aside.*) Marry, 'tis marvellous strange for a boatman to turn philosopher.

Char. Well, Sir, as it will be some time before we shall get our complement of passengers, my friend Mercury and I, in the mean time, will be glad to hear you on the matter in question. What have you to say?

Merc. (*aside.*) His friend Mercury! mighty familiar, I must confess; but this comes through ferrying over his betters.

Mat. Well, as many sins, you say, as a man is guilty of in his life, so often, in a manner imperceptible, is he stigmatized in his soul.

Merc. I do: and that you will be cited before the judges, Æacus and Rhadamanthus, to whom you will be produced in a state of nature, that they may discover how many offences you have been guilty of, by numbering your brands and marks.*

Mat. But did you never meet with, or hear of a man like me,—one without a soul?

Merc. I have certainly met with many men who live as though they had none.

Char. Yes, 'faith, and there are not a few, who when dead appear to have none. I have carried over the river many a gay and fashionable fellow who would never pay me my demand, though it is only a paltry *obolus*.

Merc. Ever thine eye on the mark, Charon; always taking care of the main chance.

Char. Aye! think not that you will ever find me exclaiming with that old fool Virgil, as in contempt of money—

> Pernicious gold!
> What bands of faith can impious lucre hold!

No, marry, I know the power of riches too well,—*pecuniæ obediunt omnia.* There is scarcely a poet in the Elysian

* See Plato's Gorgias.

Fields who is not in my debt. Why, 'twas but the other day the great Horace borrowed a brace of minæ of me, in order to pay his tailor, who would no longer be put off with excuses.

Merc. Alas! we all know that poetry and poverty are inseparable.

Char. I have had a plaguy hard time of it of late; half of my passengers were poets. They have nothing left to buy food, and then, forsooth, they must go and hang themselves; I have carried over three or four hundred of these geniuses within the last six months, but not a halfpenny was to be found among them all.

Merc. So they pay you, I suppose, with a song.

Char. Yes, 'faith, and some of their songs are as doleful ditties as ever were heard.—There is a terrible howling with many, particularly those who have been starved to death.

Mat. Starved to death! Is it possible that you should ever meet with such?

Char. Very possible, I give you my word; it was the fate of more than a third of my yesterday's cargo.

Mat. Merciful Heaven! and yet we call ourselves men!

Char. I remember that my gentlemen were pretty free in their censures of their patrons. "Not a true Mæcenas," cried one, "to be found!" "Where, alas! shall genius hide its head?" exclaimed another; but, for my part, I cannot imagine what they would have. Can they seriously expect that men will foolishly relinquish their pleasures, forego their favourite amusements, give up their horses and hounds, for a rhyme?

Mat. Well, but is there nothing due from us on the score of humanity? We may despise the rhymester as much as we please, but it is surely incumbent on those on whom Heaven has showered its favours to think a little about the man.

Merc. An odd doctrine this! I have heard the ancients of our Elysium talking thus; but it is very extraordinary in a modern.

Char. Aye, and a modern too who talks of being without a soul!

Mat. But not without a heart, remember that.

Merc. I perceive that you are one of those old-fashioned fellows who bear in mind the *homo sum* of Terence, and other such pretty maxims.

Mat. You are very right;—

Teach me to feel another's woe,

has ever been included in my prayers. It is a sentence that should be imprinted on our memories;—a sentence never to be erased! and never, at least, shall it be blotted from mine.

Char. It is a lucky circumstance that there are not many like yourself, for in such a case I should be very scant of passengers, I believe.

Mat. Well, but as you find it so very difficult to get your money from them, there would, methinks, be little reason to repine at their scarcity.

Char. True, there is something in that; but, one way or other, I generally contrive to get my fare; sometimes I oblige them to borrow the money;—that is nothing new to a poet, you know,—he can do it with a tolerable grace. But come, you were pleased to assert that you are without a soul, and even to affirm that you could easily prove it: we are ready to listen to your argument.

Mat. I have not leisure for it at present; if, however, you will take the trouble of looking into the works of some of our modern and fashionable philosophers, you will presently be convinced that what is usually denominated *soul* is nothing more than *matter;*—matter endued with a thinking faculty, but perishable with the animal body,

Merc. Well, but if the soul were mortal and perishable as the body, how would you be able, *dead* as you now are, to hold discourse with Charon and myself, or even to reason on any subject? Whatever may have

been your sentiments when living, you must surely acknowledge the absurdity of such an opinion now.

Mat. I have so long been accustomed to question the truth of every thing, that you must not look to me for a decisive answer on the matter. You tell me, indeed, that I am dead,—that my body is wholly exanimate;—but prithee how do you mean to prove it?

Merc. You are very incredulous and hard to convince. If, however, I shall introduce you to your old acquaintance; those with whom you had been used to live in intimacy when on earth, and whom you may well remember to have seen entombed; assuredly, when you are introduced to these your former associates, you will then acknowledge that you have passed to another world.

Mat. I will: and shall then believe in the existence of that spirit, or soul, which I have heard so much about; till that time, however, you must pardon my incredulity and want of faith.

Char. Well, after all, a Materialist seems to be a very happy fellow; he has never any fears; death is by no means a bug-bear to him.

Mat. None in the least: he repeats, with honest Mr. Shandy, "when I *am*, death is *not;* and when death *is*, I am *not*." In other words, that there is nothing to be looked for beyond the grave.—

Merc. Come, come, we must hear no more of this language; you will think differently in a little; the boat is ready, so prithee let us get on board.

DIALOGUE IV.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

M. De Voltaire *and* J. J. Rousseau.

Volt. My dear Rousseau, I am heartily glad to see you; here, I hope, we shall be friends.

Rouss. "My dear Rousseau!" Is this the man who employed his pen against me when living?—who attacked me continually in satires and lampoons?

Volt. Envy, my dear Sir, mere envy.

Rouss. Indeed! and are you ingenuous enough to acknowledge it?

Volt. Here I can do it cheerfully: on earth, indeed, I should never have been brought to such a confession.

Rouss. Envy is a very hateful passion;* I do not remember to have had a particle of it in my composition.

Volt. Rather extraordinary that. *Il n'y a pas d'auteur qui aime son frère,* is a kind of proverb with the French.

Rouss. Yes, and with almost every other people;† not but that there are examples of candour in literary men: nay, I have sometimes met with an author who has proved another Mæcenas to his competitor for fame.

Volt. Such a man is, in truth, an honour to his profession, and to the age in which he lives. But here, as I have already intimated, we divest ourselves of all ungenerous sentiments; we set aside all paltry distinctions; we are united in the bonds of friendship, and live in harmony and perfect peace.

Rouss. A very desirable state indeed.

* Quinctilian, speaking of envy, says it is *Vitium eorum qui nec cedere volunt, nec possunt contendere.* But this definition does not sufficiently mark the malignity of the passion. Envy (without *emulation,* without a *power to contend*) deals largely in falsehood and scurrility; it *decries* the merit it is unable to cope with.

† No author ever loved a brother:
Wits are game cocks to one another.—Gay.

Volt. But you surprise me greatly by saying that you were totally free from envy;—I always thought you had a considerable portion of it.

Rouss. Never; but I had a pretty tolerable share of pride.

Volt. In that particular I have nothing to reproach myself with; pride was ever a stranger to my breast.

Rouss. I fear me, you have forgotten yourself.

Volt. Nay, I still assert that we were unacquainted.

Rouss. How little does a man know himself! Wholly a stranger to pride do you say? have you not boasted of the notice and friendship of kings? have you not been long a resident at their courts?

Volt. Certainly: but I am speaking of literary pride; I was never ambitious of any particular distinction as an author.

Rouss. Indeed! how happened it, then, at the representations of any of your tragedies, and when called upon by the audience to be invested with the laurel crown, that there were such evident marks of satisfaction to be seen on your countenance?

Volt. As to the custom you speak of, you may remember that it has been practised towards every dramatic writer of eminence from time immemorial.

Rouss. Well, but if you really were so indifferent to the voice of praise, what could be your motive for visiting the theatre at the age of ninety, after you had long been tottering on the brink of the grave?

Volt. Why, Sir, my motive? the motive—but it is no sort of matter. Vanity is certainly out of the question.

Rouss. Are you perfectly sure of that?

Volt. I am. My reputation had been too long established for me to stand in need of any petty aid or support. The acclamations of a multitude were nothing to me.

Rouss. The arguments you make use of, to show that you were totally exempt from pride, prove, on the contrary, that she was really the inmate of your breast. The royal philosopher of Sans-Souci was not more remarkable for vain-glory.

Volt. Hold, hold; talk not thus irreverently. Have you no respect for kings? The sacred majesty of kings? God's vicegerents upon earth?

Rouss. Sacred majesty of kings! God's vicegerents upon earth! A great deal of virtue, I find, in a name.

Volt. Not so, neither. But they who serve to secure to us our temporal blessings and conveniences, are surely entitled to our respect.

Rouss. And are not those men entitled to our thanks who lay down maxims and rules of conduct for these your lesser divinities,—these your delegates of heaven?

Volt. Undoubtedly. But you were once attacked, I think, by a king: you were, no doubt, infinitely more proud of it than if he had declared himself your friend.

Rouss. O, Stanislaus, you mean. Poor fellow! he had an ambition to be distinguished as an author, and thought to effect it by a pamphlet, and even to raise his consequence by being sometimes named with me.

Volt. You treated him rather cavalierly, I think.

Rouss. And rightly. He thought to pass for an extraordinary genius—*Cedite Romani scriptores, cedite Graii!*—and piqued himself upon writing a philosophical essay in the space of three days.

Volt. He was then considerably advanced in years. But he was pleased to employ his pen against the unbelievers: had he taken the other side of the question he might possibly have acquired a name, as I have done. His performance, however, is not contemptible.

Rouss. He certainly spoke according to his feelings; and, as he believed in an omniscient and omnipotent Being, he was of opinion that in advancing that belief, he discharged his duty to God and man.

Volt. Very dull and unprofitable to a man of talents! Such a writer can only expect to be admired by women and children. "L'homme n'a ni bien à espérer ni mal à craindre après la mort," said Aristotle of old; and I have said the same.

Rouss. Thou art surely the most incorrigible of infidels! Mirabeau himself would blush to hear you.

Volt. Ah! my dear friend, do you not know how very difficult it is for a man to arrive at the pinnacle of fame?

Rouss. I do not rightly understand you. Are we not to seek in your writings for the genuine sentiments of your heart?

Volt. Nothing like them, I give you my word.—Dissimulation is now unnecessary; and I will very frankly own to you, though you are pleased to consider me as an infidel, that I have sometimes trembled while I wrote!

Rouss. Why then have you been industrious in propagating an opinion so injurious to the cause of humanity; so destructive to the hopes of man?

Volt. From the same motive that the eagle dares to beat his steep course up the sky;—from a desire of setting up my opinion against the world's;—in a word, from a love of distinction and fame.

Rouss. And was this really your only motive for ridiculing every thing that is sacred and divine?

Volt. I certainly had no other. I knew that it was the only way to succeed in my wishes, and I boldly stood forth the contemner of religious and vulgar prejudices. Every eye was fixed on me. Men looked up to me as to a superior being; they gazed on me till they were dazzled by my splendour. In fine, I acquired the consequence and notice I had so long been ambitious of.

Rouss. I cannot help thinking, however, but that you might have raised your consequence by other and less exceptionable means.

Volt. Never. You must surely have observed the fondness and partiality of mankind for every thing that is rare and uncommon. For example, we gaze with admiration on a comet, while an ordinary star is wholly unnoticed by us. For me I have ever appeared with a train of light.

Rouss. And not a little eccentric and irregular in

your orbit. But that I could readily have pardoned.—*Jean-Jacques*, you may remember, was a star that sometimes deviated from its proper sphere.

Volt. I remember, indeed, that, in your letter to the Archbishop of Paris, you told him—"Je suis devenu homme de lettres par mépris pour cet état." Do you mean to insinuate that in becoming an author you had quitted your proper sphere?

Rouss. How can you ask me such a question? Did I not observe to that same archbishop, that such was my rank and importance in the republic of letters—"que tous les gouvernemens bien policées me doivent élever des statues?"

Volt. True: I had really forgotten that particular. A pretty remarkable proof of pride!

Rouss. You are perfectly right,—pride had ever an entire possession of my soul. Many, however, will be of opinion that you had the greater reason to be proud; you who were publicly saluted on the cheek by a young and amiable duchess.

Volt. A somewhat whimsical circumstance.* But it was not the kiss of love,—nothing like your "premier baiser de l'amour,"† I give you my word.

Rouss. "Il faut distinguer le *moral* du *physique* dans le sentiment de l'amour," as I have already observed, in my discourse on the inequality of mankind; but we will call it the kiss of friendship, if you please.

Volt. It may certainly so be termed; the Duchess ever afterwards honoured me with her notice. But what

* Voltaire has given the following history of the *Kiss* in his account of the success of his tragedy of Mahomet. "Le parterre a demandé à grands cris à me voir. On m'est venu prendre dans un cache, où je m'étais tapi. On m'a mené de force dans la loge de Madame la Maréchalle de Villars, où était sa belle-fille. Le parterre était fou: il a crié à la Duchesse de Villars de me baiser, et il a tant fait de bruit qu'elle a été obligé d'en passer par là, par l'ordre de sa belle-mère. J'ai été baisé publiquement comme Alain Chartier par la Princesse Marguerite d'Ecosse; mais il dormait, et j'étais fort éveillé."

† See La Nouvelle Héloïse.

I had really reason to be proud of, were the attentions and assiduities of Madame du Châtelet.

Rouss. And I perhaps might be equally vain of the *tendres amitiés* of my little Genevoise. Ah! my dear friend, what fortunate fellows have we been,—caressed and admired by the women, abused and envied by the men!

Volt. Fortunate, do you say? why, to confess the truth, there is something pleasing in awakening envy, but I cannot say the same with respect to abuse; the *genus irritabile vatum* were ever my aversion.

Rouss. Oh, "Censure is the tax that a man pays to the public for being eminent,"—you surely have not forgotten that; but, then it is a tax which such a man will pay but for a little time. Merit is not to be kept in obscurity by any, even the most powerful of envy's arts.

Volt. Here I think you are somewhat mistaken;—

> Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
> Has felt the influence of malignant star,
> And wag'd with fortune an eternal war:—
> Check'd by the scoff of pride, by envy's frown,
> And poverty's unconquerable bar!—MINSTREL.

So says the poet; and I believe with sufficient truth. I speak of genius in its infancy; *le génie naissant*, as our language so happily expresses it.

Rouss. I, on the contrary, allude not to youthful genius, but to that which, like the proper Minerva, comes into the world full grown and mature. The timidity natural at its outset will operate a little perniciously indeed; but real merit, as I have already observed, cannot be long concealed from the public eye.

Volt. You are undoubtedly right. Thus hath it ever been, and thus may it ever remain! Farewell! live, and be happy.

Rouss. Live? Heyday! Have you then forgotten that I am now numbered among the dead?

*Volt. Si qua fata aspera rumpas, tu Marcellus eris.** Dead! 'Tis not in the power of the fates; Rousseau can never die!

* Virgil.

DIALOGUE V.

Scene—An Elegant Apartment.

Mercury* *and* A Lady of Fashion.

Lady. Well, but, Mr. Mercury, I beg you would not be in such a hurry; where are all my maids? Betty! Sally! Cicily!

Merc. O you need not trouble yourself about them—you will have no occasion for waiting-maids in the regions below.

Lady. Prithee let me appear before Mr. What-d'ye-call-him in a proper dress: why, I am an absolute fright:—I should be perfectly horrified to be seen in this dishabille.

Merc. In a proper dress! why, Madam, you must strip off every article of dress: Rhadamanthus will admit of no disguise—

Lady. Strip!† why you impudent fellow! do you think—

Merc. Hold, hold, fair lady, no hard words:—'tis even so. Our judge is, moreover, no respecter of persons:—you will be arraigned and tried with—

Lady. Arraigned and tried: mercy on me! Well, but if one must be tried, I trust one could get the privilege of being tried alone?

* It is properly the business of Iris, and not of Mercury, to free the souls of women from the chains of the body; but as Iris is the messenger of Heaven only, and as the present embassy is from the regions below, the reader will yield to the necessity of the case.

† I have somewhere read of a lady, I believe in a paper of Addison's, who expressed a considerable degree of uneasiness at the thought of appearing in the other world in the same state in which she came out of the hands of Dame Nature, "unattired, unadorned." The present dialogue is founded principally on that anecdote.

Merc. Alone! O impossible, Madam.

Lady. What, to mix with a vulgar crew! Sir, I am a person of fashion:—here are a thousand pounds for your trouble. Do now, my dear sweet gentleman, speak a word or two for me.—Is Daddy What's-his-name a good-natured creature? don't you think one might coax him a little?

Merc. A good-natured creature!* coax him! coax a judge! Why, Madam, although you may have heard of such a thing on earth, you cannot expect it with us:—no, no, Rhadamanthus is—

> An upright judge, who, zealous in his trust,
> With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just.

He is strictly impartial,—not to be corrupted, I assure you.

Lady. Alas! alas!

Merc. How, Madam! do you cry Alas! at the impartiality of your judge?

Lady. No, Sir, no:—but undressed, did you say? I shall expire—

Merc. Yes, Madam; and I can inform you, that, when brought to trial, on one side of you will stand a beautiful nymph from Billingsgate, who came to us rather suddenly, from having taken too copious a draught of juniper, and on the other side, an agreeable Wapping landlady, from whom we had long expected a visit.

Lady. Intolerable! but it is impossible that you should be serious:—you are joking, I am very sure.

Merc. Joking! no, no, Madam, there is no joking among us. By the gloomy Styx, I am serious; serious as Mr. Doleful, the comic poet, who died about a twelvemonth ago, and whose malady, as you may well remember, carried him off on the ninth day.

Lady. Well, but if you will inform this Mr. — (I shall never think of his name),—that it is my particular desire

* It should be remembered, however, that Statius has represented *Minos*, the colleague of Rhadamanthus, as particularly good-natured.

not to be seen,—that I hope he will not oblige me to mix—with the vulgar wretches who have lately left the upper world; I say, if you will have the kindness just to mention this, Mr. Mercury; your judge is surely too much of a gentleman to deny a lady so very reasonable a request.

Merc. I have already, my dear Madam, informed you that there is no distinction of persons in the shades; why then will you not patiently submit to fate?

Lady. Well—but who did you say I should have for companions?—

Merc. Why, Madam, the only females who have lately come over the water are from Wapping.

Lady. O, I recollect, I recollect; I shall certainly faint, Sir: my nerves are so very weak, that—

Merc. So we were informed by your husband, Madam, whom you sent to us several years ago.

Lady. Sent to you, Sir! Sir, I really do not understand,—such an insinuation is not to be borne.

Merc. Nay, nay, fair lady, you may well remember when you broke your husband's head instead of Priscian's,*—that it was that fatal stroke, however extraordinary you may think it, which sent him to the lower world.

Lady. You mistake; it was some natural cause.

Merc. By my deityship, 'tis true.

Lady. The blow I gave him was as gentle as a lady's hand could deal—a mere pat; nothing more, I assure you.

Merc. Not, perhaps, unlike to one of Queen Elizabeth's boxes on the ear.

Lady. A similar action,—I vow and protest; his head must have been very soft!

Merc. Well, Madam, it is an action for which you will be tried by Rhadamanthus; and happy shall I be to find you acquitted of the murder of your lord.

* ——————— abed,
For breaking Priscian's, breaks her husband's head.
Juv. Sat. 6. *Dryden's Trans.*

Lady. Murder! Oh! Mr. Mercury, how can you wound one's ears with such a horrible sound? (*Aside.*) This fellow has some of the coarsest expressions I ever heard. The best way, however, will be to soothe him a little, I believe.—You must know, Sir, for now I will declare the truth, that it was my usual practice, when any way vexed by my husband, to hit him a pat on the head with my fan; but for no other purpose, Mr. Mercury, than just to let him know that he was wrong.

Merc. A very common practice.—A fan is the weapon of a lady; and I have often seen the Queen of Heaven, when seized with a jealous fit, shiver it to pieces on Jupiter's pate.

Lady. Well, Sir, my husband having one day provoked me in a particular manner, I snatched up the poker, in mistake for my fan, and hit him—

Merc. A pat on the head. A poker in mistake for a fan! A very plausible story, indeed, which will certainly have its weight with our judge.

Lady. Of that I have not the smallest doubt;—and yet—

> I am sick and capable of fears;
> A widow, husbandless, subject to fears;
> A woman naturally born to fears.

Merc. (*aside.*) Yes, and naturally born to whining too; but it will scarcely serve your turn. Come, come, Madam, we must think of setting off.

Lady. I must insist on having my maid to attend me: I can never think of travelling with only a man.

Merc. A man! fair lady,—I am a god: cannot you distinguish between a god and a man?

Lady. True, true, I had actually forgotten. Nay, then you must do just as you please: where is the woman to be found who can resist a god?

Merc. (*aside.*) I must keep up this vein of conversation.—I am a god, the son of Jupiter, Madam, remember that.

Lady. Yes; and, without a compliment, as pretty a piece of godship as one would wish to see: you only yield to Apollo in beauty.

Merc. Your encomiums will make me vain; but Bacchus, you should remember, has precedence of me.

Lady. Bacchus! Bacchus can never enter into competition with you on the score of beauty. That woman would be the happiest creature living who should—but, if I mistake not, your godship is married?

Merc. Married! no, no, my buxom widow, I have too much of the immortal in my composition for that.

Lady. You surprise me! why I always understood that Mrs. Venus—

Merc. Poh, poh, my sister. But what do you discover in my air and manner, that you should suppose me dwindled into that obsequious animal, a husband?

Lady. Why, to confess the truth, your manner is rather too gallant and *degagée* for such a character.

Merc. And yet I am not remarkable for love and gallantry; 'tis honour I am in search of, and, as the poet sings—

> Honour is like a widow, won
> With brisk attempt.

Lady. Pray, Mr. Mercury, what do you mean by such an insinuation? There is not any man on earth, however "brisk his attempt," that could prevail with me.

Merc. Prevail with you! No, no, it is very easy to discover that your virtue serves as an impregnable fortress to you. Danaë in her brazen tower was less secure; but, though a man has so little chance of succeeding with you, yet Mercury—

Lady. Is not to be opposed; I acknowledge your power, and submit to it.

DIALOGUE VI.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

Generosus *and* Philanthropos.

Gen. How say you; that you died—perished through absolute want?

Phil. Even, so; 'tis as true as I am now an immortal spirit. Such, alas! was my body's suffering; such its miserable end.

Gen. And that too, in England, the land of plenty; and in a refined and elegant age!

Phil. You are, I perceive, a man of feeling, and, you must give me leave to add, but little acquainted with the world. The refinement and elegance you hint at, and which you think should lead to benevolence, and all the milder virtues and affections, are, in fact, their great and invariable destroyers.

Gen. Nay, you are more mistaken in the matter than myself. You, I find, allude to the affected nicety, to the glittering superficiality, of the times; while I, in speaking of the refinement and elegance of the age, am wholly intent on intellectual endowments and perfections,—and sincerely lament, that men in becoming wise, should not also become good.

Phil. Their wisdom you must allow me to doubt. I do not think, however, that all among my countrymen have been wanting, at times, in moral goodness, or in charity towards their fellows: but there is, in the major part of them, a light indifference to the complaints of others; which, however strange it may appear to you, most certainly proceeds from the largeness of their possessions, and the riot and luxury in which they live. I am a lover of mankind, and would sacrifice even my own

comforts to do them service; and thus, reflecting on the world's unkindness, and on the coolness of the great and powerful towards the deserving, causes me to feel many a severe pang.

> Appear, when next you meet, as cold as great ones
> When merit begs,————

says a poet of eminence; and most truly has he said. And another—

> Ah! little think the gay licentious proud,
> Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround—
> Ah! little think they, while they dance along,
> How many feel, this very moment, death,
> And all the sad variety of pain.

Gen. "Alas! poor hurt fowl!" It must be permitted to send forth its cries.

> Has Heaven reserv'd, in pity to the poor,
> No pathless waste or undiscover'd shore;
> No secret island in the boundless main?——
> Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore.

Feelings and wishes, like to these—and which I believe were really felt by Dr. Johnson, at the moment of writing the lines—you have doubtless experienced many times.

Phil. Such, indeed, have been my wishes, not only for myself, but others; so great, so many, are the evils and miseries of life—of civilized life.

Gen. Your ill opinion of civilized life seems deeply rooted; and were you to attempt a description of the calamities incident to our terrestrial nature, not Hegesias himself, I imagine, could possibly surpass you.

Phil. Life, simply considered, or with little relation to manners, has certainly comforts and advantages for those who are mindful to seize on them. "Is it not," says the divine Euripides, "a glorious thing to live and behold the light?" In speaking of the distresses of men, I allude not to the natural, but moral evils so generally found.

Gen. You look on human nature, then, with nearly the same eye as the Duke de Rochefoucault, who, you

may remember, has been censured by many, as drawing too gloomy a picture of the objects surrounding him.

Phil. I see it in precisely the same colours as De la Rochefoucault. His picture is uncommonly faithful and just; and his defence, as set up by the celebrated Helvetius, must be satisfactory to every observing man. "La connaissance de ces idées (les idées de l'amour-propre), aurait préservé M. de la Rochefoucault du reproche tant répété, qu'il voyait l'humanité trop en noir; il l'a connue telle qu'elle est. Je conviens que la vue nette de l'indifférence de presque tous les hommes à notre égard est un spectacle affligeant pour notre vanité; mais, enfin, il faut prendre les hommes comme ils sont. S'irriter contre les effets de leur amour-propre, c'est se plaindre des giboulées du printemps, des ardeurs de l'été, des pluies de l'automne, et des glaces de l'hiver."*

Gen. This is a concise but able justification of that excellent philosopher. In the passage, however, which you have quoted from Helvetius, whose reasoning, it must at the same time be owned, is generally cogent and close, I do not clearly perceive in what manner our pride should be so greatly hurt at the base indifference of man to man; unless, indeed, he means in the persons of those who are soliciting—who "duck the learned pate to the golden fool."† With others, who are at the same time possessed of virtue, it must be precisely the reverse. The degeneracy of their fellows necessarily gives them an opportunity of showing themselves to advantage, and their pride is consequently gratified by the event; for, to prove himself superior to common mortals, and be linked to "an higher order," (as a late philosopher has termed it, when virtue, truth, and beneficence were found to predominate in the breast,) must surely be the height of ambition in man.

Phil. "What we resemble the gods in most," says a

* De l'Esprit. † Ben Jonson.

heathen moralist, " are truth and beneficence :" the very excellences at which you point. Since you speak of " an higher order," how beautiful is the sentiment of an Indian philosopher, which I will give you in the words of the admired writer who has recorded it. " Entendrai-je toujours, disait un philosophe Indien, les riches s'écrier : Seigneur, frappe quiconque nous dérobe la moindre parcelle de nos biens; tandis que, d'un voix plaintive et les mains étendues vers le ciel, le pauvre dit: Seigneur, fais-moi part des biens que tu prodigues au riche; et si de plus infortunés m'en enlèvent une partie, je n'implorerai point ta vengeance, et je considerai ces larcins de l'œil dont on voit, au temps des semailles, les colombes se répandre dans les champs pour y chercher leur nourriture."

Gen. This sentiment is certainly the effusion of a benevolent heart, and might, could we boast of another " golden age," be entitled to praise; but, in the present state of the world, it is both morally and politically wrong; and such kind of indulgence, or lenity, would open a door to repeated impositions. The honest man who cannot find employment, and the desperate villain who will not engage in it,—and between whom, perhaps, we cannot immediately distinguish,—may be equally poor; and, consequently, on the principle laid down by the Indian, expect to become both, in some sort, partakers in our possessions. You may, on a little reflection, perceive what a torrent of abuses would be let in by passing over the depredations in question, however small; and that this toleration, were it once admitted in some few instances, would shortly lead to contention for a community of goods; and which, although it has been seriously taken up by many of our countrymen, is certainly, in the highest degree Utopian.

Phil. The honest and the dishonest must then be equally objects of neglect?

Gen. I say not that; there is provision for the honest but indigent man.

Phil. And punishment for the poor and petty rogue. The provision you speak of, however, is neither wisely nor fairly applied.

Gen. And of punishment you may say the same. In a well-regulated government, in a well-compacted state, there would be little temptation to fraud; for man, it should be remembered, is not, generally speaking, by nature a rogue and a plunderer: it is not from propensity, except in some few instances, but exigency, that he is found to be such. That punishment is necessary, I readily admit: the abandoned villain is the growth of every country. But I insist, that far the greater portion of those whom we brand with the opprobrious name are more deserving of pity than punishment; as they are hurried into evil courses by pressing and irresistible want. The sound politician, therefore, will not think so much on punishments as on rewards; but hold out benefits and advantages to all. He will shower his favours indiscriminately on the good and the bad, when the latter are not atrociously so; by which he will gratify the one, and probably "turn the hearts" of the other; in imitation of the all-beneficent God of nature, who allows the sun to shine and the rains to descend without the smallest partiality, without any regard to persons; trusting to these his creatures, as free agents, for adoration, and a grateful sense of the bounties so freely bestowed.

Phil. I acknowledge the truth of your positions, and subscribe to the justness of your remarks. But, when you speak of the Utopian scheme of allowing a community of goods, you should remember in what it originated,—a neglect of the unfortunate and the necessitous; in not attempting some establishment for those who, from want of money, are wholly unable to make such establishment for themselves: in short, in leaving the good and virtuous man on the rough and tempestuous sea of the world, to swim or sink, according to chance.

Gen. How! Have you then forgotten the establish-

ment of poor-houses? For whom, and for what purpose, is the sum of three millions* per annum collected?

Phil. Principally for the idle and the dissolute, though set on foot with a totally different view. Half of the sum you mention as raised would be sufficient for the relief of the really sick and aged among the poor. I am firmly persuaded, indeed, that full as many abuses have crept into these establishments as you seem to be apprehensive would arise from practising the act of forbearance suggested by the generous Indian. Nay, I think it might, without difficulty, be proved, that the public are far greater losers in the present order of things, than they could be in any other possible event. It is the business of a great and powerful nation, not to think so much of maintaining its poor as to hinder the increase of them, or even of the country's producing any. Sick and aged there must always be. Let us look to the plans and regulations of Frederic the Second, of Prussia, in respect to this truly important matter. Let us attend likewise to the words of a king of Persia:—"The great Shah Abbas (says his historian), among the many useful establishments made by him in Persia, founded not a single poor-house. On being asked the reason of this,—'It is my intention, and it shall be my care (said he), that there be no occasion for poor-houses, or charitable institutions, in Persia.'" By this he clearly signified, that his charity went to the making of establishments for all, by encouraging industry.—It is an astonishing circumstance, that, at the present day, scarcely a statesman is to be found who considers that the stability of a kingdom, the permanency of a government, must depend entirely on the prosperity of the people. The people, then, when found to be numerous and poor, should, as you have already hinted, be assisted; not by a slight and temporary relief (which frequently induces nothing but idleness), but by putting them in a way to make a lasting provision for themselves.

* At the close of the last century.

DIALOGUE VII.

SCENE—A CHAMBER.

MERCURY *and a* COQUETTE.

Coq. AND so, Mr. Mercury, you too are become my admirer? I really know not what to say to you; I, who have so long withstood the solicitations of that horrid creature, man.—Well—

Merc. True, fair lady; but you will find it impossible to withstand me.

Coq. So confident! but, positively, you shall not triumph over me; I will not consent these fifty years.

Merc. Your consent is of little moment, Madam; I shall certainly carry you off.

Coq. He's a charming impudent fellow! (*Aside.*) What, to Scotland, or ——?

Merc. Scotland! no; a far more delightful place;—to Elysium, gentle lady!

Coq. Elysium! my lovers have often declared, indeed, that to be with me was to be in Elysium; but I never rightly understood them.

Merc. And had you never the curiosity to inquire into their meaning?

Coq. Inquire! O, no; that were a terrible waste of time; I knew it was a sort of compliment, and that was enough for me.

Merc. They meant to tell you, Madam, that, in your society, they enjoyed a kind of heaven upon earth: they will be greatly distressed at losing you.

Coq. Losing me! why you do not imagine, that, because I am to be married to you, I must necessarily forego their company?

Merc. Married to me! no, no, pretty lady; you will shortly be wedded to Quietus.

Coq. Quietus! prithee, who is he? I do not remember to have heard of the gentleman; I am sure he is not upon my list.

Merc. But you are most assuredly upon his.

Coq. Prithee, who is he? what is his family? where does he come from? Only think to be called Mrs. Quietus,—the thought is horrid! Mrs. Quietus! I positively will have nothing to say to him.

Merc. But my master, Madam, is——

Coq. Master! mercy on me! What, are you nothing better than a serving man? Here, Thomas, Harry, turn this fellow out of doors.

Merc. Softly, gentle lady; I am an ambassador: know you not that ambassadors, when speaking of their king, will call him master?

Coq. Cry you mercy, good Sir; your master is then a king?

Merc. He is, and a very powerful one.

Coq. And he—he—(I shall positively expire with joy. *Aside.*) Spare my confusion, Sir; you understand me, no doubt?

Merc. Perfectly; you mean that you are ready to depart.

Coq. What a fortunate creature am I! A queen! What will all my companions say? They will never be able to bear it; they will, undoubtedly, burst with envy and rage. But I must play off a few of my airs. (*Aside.*) Ready to depart! O dear, no! I am not so easily won; perhaps I am not willing to depart at all.

Merc. A little force will then be requisite: ladies do not always know their own minds.

Coq. What a delightful fellow he is! But your master is a very powerful prince, you say; pray, where does he reign?

Merc. In hell!

Coq. In ——! (*Shrieks.*)

Merc. What 's the matter, my little charmer? Why are you in so great a fright? Your reverend doctor, in his sermons, has surely brought you acquainted with the place?

Coq. You are greatly mistaken, Sir; he is more of a gentleman.

Merc. A captivating fellow, I dare engage.

Coq. The prettiest preacher in the world; for—

> When he speaks, what elocution flows!
> Soft as the fleeces of descending snows,
> The copious accents fall with easy art;
> Melting they fall and sink into the heart!

O, he is a dear, sweet creature, I assure you.

Merc. You speak in raptures, young lady; I begin to suspect you are in love with him.

Coq. It is really an abominable thing that one can never speak in praise of any one to any one, but one is immediately supposed to be in love. Love! I detest the very name.

Mer. But, as your preacher is so very refined, you, I presume, are the same—

> Devoutly thus Jehovah they depose,—
> The pure! the just! and set up in his stead
> A deity that 's perfectly well-bred.

Such is the character and conduct of the woman of fashion, as described by the poets; you maintain that character, without a doubt?

Coq. Assuredly, Sir: I maintain the character of a woman of spirit and taste! and as for beauty——

Mer. Hold! hold! you grow extravagant; these self-commendations are not allowable: besides, you should remember what a celebrated poet of former days has observed on these matters:—"It is not powdering, perfuming, and every day smelling of the tailor, that converteth to a beautiful object; but a mind shining through any suit, which needs no false light, either of riches or honours, to help it."*

* Ben Jonson.

Coq. Quote not your coxcombly poets, I entreat; they are nearly as insufferable as the crabbed philosophers themselves; wretches whom the world has long been wise enough to despise.

Mer. I shall say no more. But come, fair lady, the die is cast, we must descend to Elysium without delay; we must hasten to the regions of bliss.

Coq. To the regions of bliss! O, Mr. Mercury, with all my heart; quickly, instantly, lead the way.

DIALOGUE VIII.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

Scarron *and* La Fontaine.

Scar. Ha! Yonder is that strange, that incomprehensible, creature, La Fontaine.* I must have a little conversation with him. What, ho! Monsieur *le Faiseur d'Oreilles,*† for so I think I may call you, from the great attention you commanded by your writings.

La Font. Scarron! good morrow;—but this is a compliment I never expected from you.

Scar. Prithee, why so? Do you suppose me insensible to the claims of genius and merit?

* This is supposed to allude to the character of La Fontaine as drawn by M. de la Bruyère—"Quoi dans le monde de plus incompréhensible? Un homme paraît grossier, lourd, stupide; il ne sait pas parler, n'y raconter ce qu'il vient de voir; s'il se met à écrire, c'est le modèle des bons contes; il fait parler les animaux, les pierres, tout ce qui ne parle point: ce n'est que légèreté, qu'élegance, que beau naturel, et que délicatesse, dans ses ouvrages."

† See a tale of La Fontaine's, so entitled.

La Font. No;—but were we not contemporaries? And, as we both affected the humorous in our writings, consequently rivals? It is, therefore, highly natural that we should regard each other with an envious and suspicious eye.

Scar. True, it might be natural on earth, indeed. But you should consider, that we are now in the Elysian Fields.

La Font. Here, then, you imagine, we are no longer tormented by evil passions. This, says the poet, is a place where

> Envy no more her snaky crest shall rear;

and so say you. But you were a good deal persecuted in the upper world. Your humour, if I remember right, which shone so conspicuously in most of your performances, was never thoroughly acknowledged till you had descended to the shades.

Scar. I lost much of the reputation I had justly acquired in novel-writing, by attempting comedy, for which I was almost wholly unfit.

La Font. Your comedy, no doubt, was ill adapted to the nice and delicate taste of our countrymen, the French. You imitated Molière, but it was in his most faulty and extravagant manner.

> Dans le sac, ridicule où Scapin s'envelope,
> Je ne reconnais plus l'auteur du Misanthrope,

says the satirist. Yet performances resembling the *Fourberies de Scapin* were the favourites of Scarron: the models he closely and attentively studied.

Scar. You, too, were a writer of comedy; and, though possessed of a truly comic genius, as is sufficiently discoverable in your fables and tales, had never, I think, the good fortune to succeed in the drama.

La Font. I was equally unsuccessful with yourself. To speak, however, ingenuously, we met the fate we had well deserved. Our dramas are *plat* and *fade* in a

* Boileau.

remarkable degree. The *faux plaisant*, in the following lines, is I believe intended to point at us both :—

> J'aime sur le théâtre un agréable auteur,
> Qui, sans se diffamer aux yeux du spectateur,
> Plait par la raison seule, et jamais ne la choque.—
> Mais, pour un faux plaisant, à grossière équivoque,
> Qui pour me divertir n'a que la saleté,
> Qu'il s'en aille, s'il veut, sur deux tréteaux monté,
> Amusant le Pont-neuf de ses sornettes fades,
> Aux laquais assemblés, jouer ses mascarades.

Scar. Admirable! The lines, I think, are from Boileau's Art of Poetry: a performance which I am inclined to consider, with a celebrated critic, as the best of the kind that has yet appeared.

La Font. Yes, and the rules laid down in it have been strictly attended to by the French. The ears of our countrymen are no longer offended by the *saletés*, the *équivoques grossières*, so justly complained of: such expedients our authors have left entirely to the English farce-writer.

Scar. Aye, and the English farce-writer has fully availed himself of them. He seems to consider them as admirable improvements in his art: capital embellishments to his work.

La Font. He does; and I am truly sorry to find it so. There cannot be a greater proof of the degeneracy of the times than in the toleration of loose and immoral performances on the stage. The moral health of the people should be the primary consideration of the magistrate; and, if he is desirous of seeing that health prevail, he will be attentive to the means of preserving it. In a word,—nothing can be more ridiculous than to expect a nation to be virtuous, while you are formally presenting it with lessons in vice.

Scar. Right. It is, however, a matter that the magistrate seems to be little solicitous about. But whether this arises from indolence or from the mistaken notion

that "private vices are public benefits,"* I cannot pretend to say.

La Font. The case is this: he thinks he sufficiently discharges his duty in enforcing the laws: but it is an undoubted truth, that good government consists not in the punishing of crimes with severity, but in using the most effectual means for the preventing them:—a truth, which is set forth and maintained with considerable ability by the Abbé Beccaria, in his truly valuable publication, entitled *Dei dilletti e delle pene.* But to return to the theatre. It is by no means sufficient that we are amused within its walls. It is a place to which we should occasionally repair for instruction. In fine, the stage was originally intended to be a school of morality, whereas it is now a nursery for folly, foppery, and vice.

Scar. Dramatic writers will tell you, however, that, in exhibiting the folly and foppery you are speaking of, they render it generally odious and detested.

La Font. It is impossible that such should be the effect of their labours. You must surely have observed, that the fine gentleman of the comedy, the seducer and betrayer of innocence, is always the favourite and predominant character. After having run the race of licentiousness and passion, after having disturbed the peace and good order of families,—and for which, among savages, he would suffer death,—you will find, that he is too often dismissed to happiness, and with the most amiable woman that can be found.

Scar. A gross and unpardonable fault. It is from attending such representations that many females have thrown themselves into the arms of the libertine and debauchee. It is in theatres that they have learned the absurd and pernicious maxim, that "the best husband is to be expected in the reformed rake."

La Font. A truly pernicious maxim, indeed! yet a favourite one with many of the fair sex.

* See Mandeville's Fable of the Bees.

Scar. It is: and, till wholly discarded from comedies and romances, it will undoubtedly continue.

La Font. The reform should begin in the theatre. This, you may remember, has been attempted. But, when a moral performance has made its appearance, the *beaux esprits*, by ridiculing it, under the denomination of *comédie larmoyante*, have presently driven it from the stage.

Scar. Wit and humour are powerful weapons. A stroke of pleasantry has frequently occasioned the failure of a play. "*La reine boit!*" you may remember, contributed more towards the downfall of Voltaire's *Mariamne*,* than all the criticisms which were written on it.

La Font. Alas! how uncertain and fleeting is the reputation of the man of letters—

A breath destroys him, as a breath had rais'd!

Scar. And yet how very many are catching at the "bubble reputation;" a bubble which, perhaps, vanishes in the very moment that each one thinks he holds it securely in his grasp.

La Font. True:—though it is not always reputation alone that the candidate in question has in view. He, of whom it may be said,

Vivit siliquis et pane secundo,

looks for something more than empty praise.

Scar. Yes, wealth would, no doubt, be equally acceptable to him.

La Font. Not, however, unless it can be procured with honour to himself: for *miserum est alienâ vivere quadrâ*. To such a situation the man of spirit will never submit.

* "L'auteur faisait mourir Mariamne par le poison: et on le lui donnait sur le théâtre. C'était vers le temps des rois que la pièce fut jouée. Un petit maître dans le parterre, voyant donner la coupe empoisonné à cette princesse, s'avisa de crier: 'La reine boit.' Tous les François se mirent à rire, et la pièce ne fut point achevée."—ADV. TO MARIAMNE.

Scar. In that you are mistaken: it is a situation to which the man of spirit is frequently obliged to stoop. "'Tis not in mortals to command success." Bending beneath the weight of miseries, reduced to actual want, how then would you have him act?

La Font. "*Qu'il meurt!*"*

Scar. To such a sentiment I have nothing to oppose. Most willingly then do I repeat it—Let him die!*

DIALOGUE IX.

SCENE—A CHAMBER.

MERCURY *and* AN OLD MAN.

Old Man. You have certainly made a mistake. Your business can never be with me.

Merc. Not the smallest mistake. Your name, I think, is Senex.

Old Man. The same. But summoned, do you say, to the other world?

Merc. Such is my order.

Old Man. That is, you come to give me notice, I suppose. Well, well, in about twenty years I shall be ready for you.

Merc. Twenty years! you must make ready now. I can no longer wait for you. Pluto will be displeased at the stay I have already made.

Old Man. Aye, but if Pluto knew my age, I am sure he would spare me for a little time.

Merc. What, I pray you, is your age?

Old Man. Only ninety, good Sir. It is very hard at the age of ninety—(*Aside,*) I have sunk half a dozen years upon him, but he will scarcely find me out.

* See the Horace of P. Corneille.

Merc. Only ninety! death is then a terrible stroke, indeed.—But who is this blooming creature, who approaches us with so gay an air?

Old Man. That blooming creature is my wife.

Merc. Your wife! assuredly she will be happy to find herself a widow.

Old Man. Oh, no! a very different character. She is the softest, tenderest——But let her not know your office; she will run distracted at the thought of losing me.

Merc. Ha! ha! ha! why she has been preparing a dose of poison, with an intention of administering it to you in your evening potation.

Old Man. O the Jezebel, the Jezebel! Why—

> She would hang upon me,
> As if increase of appetite had grown
> By what it fed on.

Merc. But, pray, how old is your wife, venerable gentleman?

Old Man. But little more than eighteen.

Merc. A charming age, indeed! Pray introduce me to her.

Old Man. With all my heart, 'faith. (*Aside,*) I like the motion well: he may be induced to take Lucretia instead of me.—She is accounted a very great beauty, I assure you, and the finest temper in the world. Egad, I begin to think I shall be able to puff her off.

Enter WIFE.

Wife. Ah, my dear husband! Your loving wife is come—

Old Man. (*aside.*) Oh, traitress! come not near me.

Wife. But who is this gentleman? A charming fellow, as I live! What a figure is there!

> An eye like Jove, to threaten and command,'
> A station like the herald Mercury!

Merc. A goddess, sure! Do my eyes deceive me? Is it Venus I see, or—

Wife. O, dear sir—

Old Man. Egad, he begins to make *doux yeux* at her. What a lucky dog am I!

Merc. My father, Jupiter, never won a fairer creature. Prithee, Mr. Senex, how came you possessed of so rich a prize?

Old Man. Love, Sir, love. Her love was so very great.—

Merc. Love! why do you suppose it possible that she could have any affection for you?

Old Man. For my money, I am very sure she had. Her love of show and grandeur I always knew; and, before you mentioned the poisoning business, I really imagined she had a regard for myself alone.

Merc. But did reason never come to your aid?

Old Man. She would obtrude herself upon me at times; but then I always discarded her as a troublesome guest.

Merc. And could you be content to live, if deprived of the society of your lovely wife?

Old Man. I could wish to mourn for Lucretia a little, just to show the world how very sincerely I regret the loss of her.

Merc. Well, then, we must spare you for a little time, since you are so very desirous of it.

Old Man. Thanks, many thanks, to you. Well, the world may say what it will, but there is an advantage in having a handsome wife.

DIALOGUE X.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

Statius *and* Juvenal.

Stat. Prithee tell me, Juvenal,—since here we may unbosom ourselves with freedom,—what was your real meaning in the verses beginning—*Curritur ad vocem jucundam*, and in which you were pleased to mention me. Was it satire or panegyric?

Juv. Panegyric: and such as you well deserved;—how could you have a doubt on the matter?

Stat. I never was in doubt about it. But, the critics being divided in opinion as to whether the passage was written jeeringly or in praise, I resolved, on meeting you, to ask the question.

Juv. Critics are ever a prying and inquisitive race; and, however plain and level to the sense a man may write, they will generally contrive to find him difficult: will always suspect that something is hidden or obscured: which their sagacity must, therefore, be employed to find out. He, accordingly, sets to work; and when, after considerable labour, he has discovered "meanings that were never meant," who shall pretend to dispute his abilities, or his right to the "noble name?"*

Stat. I always supposed the business of a critic to be of a very different nature.

Juv. To point out the several merits and inaccuracies of his author, and to render him clear and intelligible to the world, is, perhaps, your idea of a critic.

Stat. Something like it, I readily confess.

* You who bear the critic's noble name.—Pope.

Juv. No, Sir, no. The way to acquire reputation in the matter is to aim at rendering your author obscure: to twist and entangle his subject, so as to give you an opportunity of showing your skill and dexterity in unravelling it.

Stat. Commentators, indeed, have sometimes exercised their genius in this way; though they, not unfrequently, as the poet observes,—

> Gloze and *explain* a thing till all men doubt it.—POPE.

Upon the whole, however, we are under very many obligations to them.

Juv. You are right. We owe much to the judicious annotator. But you are perfectly easy, I hope, in the mention that is made of you in my Seventh Satire, and believe that the passage in question was really intended as a compliment.

Stat. I do;—but I have been strangely and wantonly treated by critics. Some have censured me as an imitator, because, from the nature of my poem, the *Thebaid*, I was under the necessity of describing manners and customs that had been already particularly noted by Homer and Virgil; though it is very easy to discover, in my account of the "public games and funeral obsequies" (the principal matters for the poet of antiquity), that I was not a little careful to look out for different circumstances and events in them, so that the sameness of my subject might, in some degree, be compensated for by the diversity of my manner. Others, again, have attacked me for deviating from the line marked out by my illustrious predecessors, and for having aimed at what an eminent writer is pleased to call the "false fame of originality." Nay, that same writer has even observed: "So impossible it is, without deserting Nature herself, to dissent from her faithful copiers, that the main objection to the Sixth Book of the Thebaid hath arisen from the fruitless endeavour of being original, where common sense and the reason of the thing would

not permit it:" and another, from whose sentence in matters of taste it has been said there lies not any appeal, remarks:—"Statius hath not borrowed from either of his predecessors, and his poem is so much the worse for it."

Juv. Ah, my dear Statius! such kind of objections are wholly unworthy your notice. *Strada*, you may remember, in his Prolusions, has assigned to you the topmost station on Parnassus. The censures of Pope and Bossu are indeed the most to be regarded, though I am of opinion that their attack on you was principally occasioned by their predilection and fondness for the celebrated epic writers who had gone before. They considered you merely as a copier.

Stat. I have certainly imitated Virgil in some of his most beautiful passages. I mean not to conceal my obligations to him, but, on the contrary, am proud to acknowledge them.

To copy nature was to copy him.

Yet, even Virgil, you know, has been called a servile imitator; nay, he has by some been styled an absolute plagiary.

Juv. The cry of petty critics. Any man, who may touch upon a matter that has been already treated by an eminent writer, is immediately attacked by the little wits; and, though he may have handled his subject in a manner totally different from his predecessor, he is instantly hailed by them as an imitator, if not a plagiarist. But their ignorance is so very great, that they know not how to make distinctions. Imitation, properly speaking, consists not in a resemblance of subject, but in a resemblance of expression. Nothing could be more absurd, for example, than to call the writer of a comedy an imitator, and for no other reason, than that comedies had been written long before he was in being; and the same observation will hold with respect to every other species of composition.

Stat. Your remark is certainly just: nay, I look upon a successful imitation, even where the original writer's expression is occasionally adopted, to be a capital effort of genius: provided the author imitated be really a distinguished one. It clearly evinces similar and kindred feelings; a congeniality of soul, as I may call it. In a word, an excellent model cannot be too attentively and diligently studied.

Juv. "Common sense directs us to regard resemblances in great writers, not as the pilferings or frugal acquisitions of needy art, but as the honest fruits of genius, the free and liberal bounties of unenvying nature," says a celebrated author; and it is a passage which should be read and attended to by every pretender to the title of *critic:* for, however extraordinary it may appear to such pretenders, it is absolutely necessary that they should read before they write; that is, before they attempt to sport with the fame and reputation of any man.

Stat. True; and it should likewise be remembered, that imitation not unfrequently arises from a desire of trying our strength with an admired original; of disputing with him the palm of genius; for, to say of any one that he has led the way in a particular line of writing, is saying little: the literary pupil, if I may be allowed to call him so, or he who copies the style and manner of another, has been often found to surpass his master. The pictures of Raffaëlle and Domenichino are superior to those of the painters who taught them their art.

Juv. The dread of imitation is undoubtedly the stumbling-block of the moderns. Had the same ridiculous notions obtained in former days, many capital productions would now be wanting to us. In fine, with such ideas no man could ever venture into competition with any one. Emulation would be wholly at a stand.

Stat. The clamour raised against imitation is entirely occasioned by the reprobatory expression of Horace, *O imitatores, servum pecus.* But I am persuaded that the meaning of that elegant poet is generally misunder-

stood. Horace could never think of marking the imitator,—the man who boldly stands forth the competitor and rival of another, with the opprobrious epithets of base and servile. No, his intention, without question, is to stigmatize the counterfeit author, he who steals the sentiments, the language, the very words, of an eminent writer; not he who makes choice of that writer's subject or story. In other words, the barefaced and impudent plagiary.

Juv. I am entirely of your opinion, with respect to the expression in question. It is highly improbable that he who had closely imitated an admired poet,—for we are expressly told by Horace himself, that the form or kind of writing in his Satires is exactly the same with that of Lucilius;—it is highly improbable, I say, that such a man should formally set up for the contemner and proscriber of imitators: nay, do we not find, by the *difficile est proprie communia dicere,* and the *publica materies privati juris erit,* &c. so happily expounded by a learned prelate, that the poet even advises to imitation on particular subjects, but with the following cautions: 1st. Not to follow the trite, obvious, round of the original work, *i. e.* not servilely and scrupulously to adhere to its plan or method. 2d. Not to be translators instead of imitators; *i. e.* if it shall be thought fit to imitate more expressly any part of the original, to do it with freedom and spirit, and without a slavish attachment to the mode of expression.*

Stat. Houdar de la Motte, a very ingenious writer, and one who followed closely on the heels of Horace, appears to have understood the "*O imitatores,*" &c. of that poet exactly in the manner that we have interpreted it. Witness the following lines in his *Descente aux Enfers:*—

Voici la foule téméraire
De ces *imitateurs* grossiers,
Dont jadis le front *plagiaire*
Se parait d'injustes lauriers, &c.

* See "Notes on the Art of Poetry," by Bishop Hurd.

Juv. Truly a case in point. But what think you of the men who maintain that Homer is an imitator, and even a plagiary ?

Stat. Homer ! You astonish me ! I always thought his originality had been generally acknowledged.

Juv. Not by critics and commentators. They, you know, must start objections. Now, some of them have laboured to prove him an imitator, from the truly wonderful discovery that the archetype of his poem is in nature—

Stat. Admirable ! The language of Mr. Bayes, in the Rehearsal,—" I despise your Beaumonts and Fletchers, who borrowed all they wrote from nature," &c.

Juv. While others have as boldly asserted that he is a plagiary, from the great improbability, say they, that the Iliad should be the work of an individual,—an individual in the situation of Mæonides.

Stat. This, indeed, is in the genuine spirit of modern criticism. This, I think, may be styled the *non ultra* of cavil and objection. But are such writers ever attended to ?

Juv. Alas ! too often. Recollect the words of your favourite Boileau—he was tolerably acquainted with men and manners :—

> Ainsi qu'en sots auteurs,
> Notre siècle est fertile en sots admirateurs ;
> Et, sans ceux que fournit la ville et la province,
> Il en est chez le duc, il en est chez le prince.
> L'ouvrage le plus plat a, chez les courtisans,
> De tout temps rencontré de zélés partisans ;
> Et pour finir enfin par un trait de satire,
> Un sot trouve toujours un plus sot qui l'admire.

Stat. Very consoling to the modern Mæviuses ; to the " half-learned witlings" of the day !

Juv. Undoubtedly. But as Pope and Churchill are coming towards us, we will therefore seek out a less frequented place.

DIALOGUE XI.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

Frederick II. King of Prussia, *and* Voltaire.

Volt. Ha! Frederick! welcome to the Elysian Fields!

Fred. Hey-dey! you are strangely familiar with a king.

Volt. The king and the beggar are here the same: but surely you have no remains of earthly animosity against me now? Here must every transaction of our former lives be forgotten.

Fred. Ay, but the dignity of my character——

Volt. Again! Prithee, step with me to yonder river; to—

Lethe's brink;
There let us quaff, a long oblivious drink;—

A long oblivion to all worldly affairs.

Fred. I begin to think you honest; and must, therefore, decline your invitation to taste of the Lethean stream; since, in doing it, our ancient friendship might be buried in oblivion with the rest.

Volt. 'Tis nobly said; to pardon offences is truly godlike,—it sets you greatly above the condition of a king. Now, as the grenadier observed, at the conclusion of the battle of Torgau, thou art indeed my old Fritz.*

* "The king, growing warm, unbuttoned his surtout, and then the soldiers observed a musket-ball fall from it, and, from the holes which were made in his clothes, they also perceived the danger he had encountered: the grenadiers then exclaimed, 'Thou art our own old Fritz; thou partakest every danger with us, and we will die for thee!' Fritz is the diminutive of Frederick, and expressive of familiarity and affection."—Vie de Fred. II.

Fred. I much regret our having ever quarrelled; the issue of the dispute redounded no way to the honour of either of us.

Volt. It will serve at once, however, as a lesson to the king and to the philosopher: the former will comport himself with a suitable dignity and reserve; while the latter, in consequence of that reserve, will think he is particularly honoured by the notice which may chance to be taken of him.

Fred. A very ingenuous observation; and yet the ridicule you have attempted to throw upon me——

Volt. Ay, there, indeed, I appear to disadvantage; ridicule is the rock on which I split. I weakly endeavoured to hold up to derision every thing that is sacred and great; but all my efforts were ineffectual; they only returned, as the poet has observed on a different occasion, to plague the inventor.

Fred. The letter I wrote to you immediately on my accession to the throne was, probably, the source of all the mischief;—flattery, like a strong vinous liquor, mounts with rapidity to the brain.

Volt. Even so; I became intoxicated with the luscious draught. O, folly! how closely dost thou tread upon the heels of wisdom! Self-sufficiency, thou ignis fatuus, how dost thou lead us astray!

Fred. No matter! all must now be forgotten: the "great teacher death" has visited us: we are at this time sensible of all our failings.

Volt. The charity and brotherly love which we refuse to each other when living, and which would so greatly contribute to our happiness in that probationary state, we liberally dispense when there is no longer occasion for it; when all are brought to a level by fate; when even the great, the magnanimous Frederick, is as though he had never been.

Fred. Frederick, as though he had never been! He, whose name shall live in story till nature itself shall decay, till it returns to the chaos from which it sprang.

Volt. This, perhaps, would, by your enemies, be termed a species of vain-glory; but, I think, with little reason: it is sometimes allowable, even on earth, for a man to speak on the subject of his own particular excellences.

Fred. True; and yet it should be only permitted when the world is backward, or niggardly in the praise of extraordinary merit; of which the possessor is thoroughly conscious.

Volt. Such as that of the *très célèbre et très renommé* Voltaire.

Fred. Somewhat in my own style, I must confess;—but proceed. I never was an enemy to raillery, you know; *la raillerie fine et délicate.*

Volt. I met with much of it at *Sans Souci;* it was there I found *faceta et elegans ironia,* as the Roman orator expresses it, and this was at all times particularly gratifying; it was there I projected *La Pucelle d'Orléans:* pray, what is your opinion of that performance?

Fred. Merum sal, as Addison observed on a poem of Pope's; admirably facetious, and exquisitely poignant.

Volt. I must now, in turn, commend you for your ingenuousness: for as we were originally sincere in our friendship, so, I believe, we should have remained, had it not been that you were a man of *letters* as well as of war; as I was for reigning over the literary world with despotic sway, I could ill endure "a brother near the throne."

Fred. Ha! I knew not so much when in our earthly state, or I might have been tempted to repeat to you, with England's divinity, Shakspeare,—

> I charge thee, fling away ambition;
> By that sin fell the angels.

Volt. How little is man acquainted with himself: is it Frederick the Second, of Prussia, who speaks? Has he already forgotten the "ill-weaved ambition" which was so long entwisted around his heart?

Fred. The kingly part of my character has been generally mistaken: I no doubt felt the force of ambition; but it was not the ambition which excites to conquest; it was that which prompts to the preservation, and with honour, of one's essential and indefeasible rights. I had said, in my Anti-Machiavel, written, you may remember, when I was prince of Prussia, that "the new conquests of a sovereign do not render the dominions he possessed before more opulent nor more prosperous." Thus I spoke,—and such have ever been my sentiments: ambition is not, by consequence, a vice; on the contrary, under proper regulations, and in particular circumstances, it becomes a virtue.

Volt. Agreed; and in the arts of peace——

Fred. Ay, there I was indeed a cormorant of praise. To render his people happy, by adding to the natural advantages of a country, is surely befitting a king.—How, for instance, did the general face of Prussia appear to you?

Volt. Sometimes I thought myself in the orchards of Alcinous; then again, in the gardens of Adonis; so admirably and so carefully were the useful and the elegant blended and scattered around.

Fred. And my own domains, my palaces, and my pleasure-grounds, what were your opinion of these?

Volt. Residences for the immortal gods! and where we, in some degree, tasted of the happiness we now enjoy.

Fred. And where wit, you may remember, flew about as though Apollo had presided at the board.

Volt. The symposiacs, at Potsdam, were indeed remarkably brilliant; but when the *ophthalmus* is remembered, that brilliancy will cease to surprise. With respect to yourself, I must observe,—while acknowledging the supremacy of your wit—that a satirical vein was sometimes too freely indulged in. There is a sort of cruelty in placing a man at one's table for no other purpose than to make him the butt of the

company: Polnitz and others experienced a good deal of this at your hands. The celebrated Lord Bacon has made a remark or two in point: "Speech of touch, towards others, should be sparingly used; for discourse ought to be as a field, without coming home to any man. I knew two noblemen, of the west part of England, whereof the one was given to scoff, but kept ever royal cheer in his house; the other would ask of those that had been at his table, 'Tell truly was there never a flout or dry blow given?' To which the guest would answer, such and such a thing passed. The lord would say, 'I thought he would mar a good dinner; discretion of speech is more than eloquence; and to speak agreeably to him with whom we deal is more than to speak in good words or in good order.'"

Fred. Thus the matter stands; my raillery was frequently mistaken for ridicule; but I had never any intention to offend.

Volt. Let us attend to the reasoning of Montesquieu on this very subject: "Princes," says that elegant writer, "ought to be extremely circumspect in point of raillery; it pleases, when moderate, because it opens the way to familiarity; but biting raillery is less excusable in them than in the meanest of their subjects, for it is they alone that give a mortal wound."

Fred. I stand reproved: this, however, comes with very little grace from the Philosopher of Ferney; he who had frequently all the bitterness of Diogenes himself, and who spared not even his particular friends.

Volt. Such was my failing I honestly confess; yet you must remember that as I was not a king, so the people attacked by me might freely retort.

Fred. Few of the gentry in question, however, were displeased with this my freedom. I rewarded them for the entertainment they afforded me; some I paid with burgundy and some with praise; but still the practice is not to be defended; I feel the force of the objection now.

Volt. I must, at the same time, take occasion to

remark, that a spirit of raillery is not very frequently the failing of kings; austerity and moroseness are generally the principal features in their character.

Fred. The happy mean, my friend, is not very easily attained; gravity is pronounced pride, and freedom of speech is declared insolence.

Volt. This, indeed, is observed in ordinary life; but princes, I believe, are seldom reproached with either.

Fred. Plutarch, however, has remarked it of some of his heroes; many of whom, you must acknowledge, were, at least, deserving to be ranked with kings.

Volt. Sovereignty is rather lightly treated by you, methinks.

Fred. Why true: the modern monarch, with his *Sainte Ampoule*, had never any favour in my sight. I formerly acquainted you with my sentiments as to the *duties* of a king; yet, as they are very probably forgotten by you, it may not be altogether impertinent to repeat them now: "Un souverain, grand ou petit, peut être regardé comme un homme dont l'emploi est de rémédier autant qu'il est en son pouvoir aux misères humaines: il est comme le médécin qui guérit, non pas les maladies du corps, mais les malheurs de ses sujets. La voix des malheureux, les gémissemens des misérables, les cris des opprimés, doivent parvenir jusqu'à lui: soit par pitié pour les autres, soit par un certain retour sur soi-même, il doit être touché de la triste situation de ceux dont il voit les misères; et, pour peu que son cœur soit tendre, les malheureux trouveront chez lui toute la compassion dont ils ont besoin. Un prince est, par rapport à son peuple, ce que le cœur est à l'égard de la structure mécanique du corps; il reçoit le sang de tous les membres, et il le repousse jusqu'aux extrémités; il reçoit la fidélité et l'obéissance de ses sujets, et il leur rend l'abondance, la prospérité, la tranquillité, et tout ce qui peut contribuer aux biens et à l'accroissement de la société. . . . . L'humanité, cette vertu si récommandable, et qui renferme toutes les autres, devrait,

selon moi, être le partage de tout homme raisonnable; et, s'il arrivait que cette vertu s'éteignît dans tout l'univers, il faudrait encore qu'elle fût immortelle chez les princes."

Volt. Admirable! This is indeed to be a king; and is the character to which yourself may fairly pretend.

Fred. And yet my actions have been as severely reprobated by some, as my principles have been by others.

Volt. Yes, by cavillers, and *les petits esprits*, as you have well denominated them in your writings; men who are content with viewing the superficies of things, who are directed, not by reason but caprice.—The glory of a monarch, like the sun, may for a time be obscured by clouds, but, then, the hour will assuredly come when it will break forth in all its lustre—

> When first that sun too powerful beams displays,
> It draws up vapours which obscure its rays;
> But even those clouds at last adorn its way,
> Reflect new glories, and augment the day.—POPE.

Fred. You have likewise been greatly vilified by the *faux raisonneurs* of the times; but we shall triumph over the prejudices of the world.—Farewell!

DIALOGUE XII.

SCENE—A CHAMBER.

MERCURY.—*A* FATHER *is discovered at the Bedside of his* SON, *and weeping;*—PHYSICIAN *attending.*

Father. AH, my poor boy! My poor boy! Not the smallest hope of his recovery, do you say? Alas! alas! was there ever misery equal to mine?

Phys. There is little hope, indeed: but let me entreat you to be composed, and submit with patience to the will of Heaven.

Father. Aye, but to rear him with care and attention; to bestow on him the education of a prince; to have him attain his twentieth year; and then to see him suffer thus—Oh! had it pleased Heaven to have spared my child and to have taken me, I could have received the fatal summons without a murmur: I am surely the meetest companion for death. But yonder is Mercury, the messenger of the gods, he is coming to conduct my dear Eugenius to the shades.—Oh! my dear boy! my dear boy!

Merc. Your boy, good Sir, is safe; he lives, and will be happy: the gods, in pity to your sufferings, and in compliance with your ardent wishes——

Father. Be witness for me, heaven, how sincere those wishes were!—

Merc. Have determined on taking you, instead of him.

Father. How! What! Come, come, a truce with this raillery, I am not in a jesting mood.

Merc. The gods jest not on these matters: I must certainly have you in my suite.

Father. But I am wholly unprepared; I have a thousand things to do; beside, I have never made my will.

Merc. That is not necessary, since you have not a relation living except your son, and he is, consequently, heir to your possessions.

Father. Well, well, but my friends; only consider my friends; some of them are actually sinking beneath the weight of poverty and accumulated ills.

Merc. Indeed! but have you never afforded them any relief?

Father. O, no; and it would be barbarous in the extreme to do any thing for your friends till you are dead.

Merc. You surprise me! but I suppose it is the fashion of the world.

Father. Entirely: and every action of our lives is regulated by fashion; we eat, drink, walk, talk, and even think, just as she directs.

Merc. Think! I do not rightly understand you.

Father. Why, Sir, she presides particularly over our studies: if, for example, the favourite one be metaphysics, you, too, must accordingly look grave, and stroke your beard.

Merc. Metaphysics! pray, what is meant by the study of metaphysics?

Father. The study of metaphysics is an inquiry into that which it is impossible ever to learn.

Merc. A very delightful inquiry, indeed.

Father. But, then, you should remember that it gives rise to much hypothetical reasoning,—to learned disquisitions,—which tend to increase our fame.

Merc. But are not such disquisitions much more ingenious than solid? in my opinion, truth alone is to be admired—

> Le vrai seul est beau, le vrai seul est aimable.—BOILEAU.

But come, I have wasted considerable time on earth, and must think of returning home.—You, old gentleman, have your wish; your son is fated to live, and you, in place of him, to become the inhabitant of Pluto's "drear domain."

Father. My wish! you mistake the matter entirely; in such a situation a man should never be taken at his word: it was a fever of the brain, an absolute phrenzy; I knew not what I said.

Merc. Well; but, as either you or your son must instantly visit the regions below, you have surely no desire to retract the wish that you have made.

Father. Why that—as to that—I really think that, as I am wholly unprepared, "unanointed," "unaneled," and as the sickness of my son has enabled him to look with complacency on that Gorgon death,—in such a case I say with the poet—

> The wearied and most loathed worldly life,
> That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment,
> Can lay on nature, is a paradise
> To what we fear of death!

Now, this admitted, he, who by a course of meditation and prayer has fitted himself for the other world, can feel but little uneasiness in the prospect of being speedily removed to it.

Son. Your reasoning, my father, is just: vigour is returning to my veins;—I feel the spring of life renewed: yet such is the present temper of my soul, that I could submit with fortitude to the stroke of death; nay, I even wish not that it should be delayed.

Merc. Observe the effect of christian resignation and love! you have a pattern of meekness and humility in your son.

Father. Alas! my life has been wicked, and death is, therefore, to be feared.—Now, if, by religious exercises——

Merc. Your present wish, then, is to live, in order to make atonement for your sins?

Father. It is certainly my only desire.

Merc. It is highly praiseworthy, and must, therefore, be encouraged: I will represent your case to my sovereign.

Father. Many thanks to you. [*Exit Mercury.*] Ha! ha! I have cheated his divinityship: nothing like pretending to religion and piety; nothing equal to a little hypocrisy: marry, I have carried it rarely!

DIALOGUE XIII.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

Rabelais, Cervantes, *and* Sterne.

Sterne. "My dear Rabelais! and my dearer Cervantes!"* happy am I to see you.

Rab. Prithee, Cervantes, are you acquainted with this shade? He addresses us very familiarly; I do not remember to have seen him before.

Cerv. 'Tis Sterne, or Shandy, or Yorick; he is newly arrived here; but you, no doubt, know him sufficiently by name.

Rab. Sterne! a distinguished name indeed: welcome, most welcome, to the Elysian fields!

Sterne. Many thanks to you. My first desire, on arriving here, was to find the men whose writings had afforded me such exquisite pleasure on earth. I was conversing with Lucian when you passed his bower; he kindly pointed you out to me, and I hastened to embrace my friends,—if such I may be allowed to call you.

Rab. You do us much honour: but Lucian may be displeased at your quitting his society to follow us.

Sterne. There is little fear of that; I left him in excellent company,—no other than Addison and Swift.

Cerv. Once more, then, our dearest brother in pleasantry, once more, welcome to Elysium. But what is going on in the upper world? How many successors have you in wit and humour?

Sterne. Alas! but few: wit is degenerated into puns, and humour into buffoonery.

Rab. The English, it should be remembered, were never remarkable for fine-turned raillery; it is properly the province of the French.

* See Tristram Shandy.

Sterne. The English are as capable of it as any other people, as several successful efforts have shown; the general taste, however, is bad, and it is on that account that my countrymen have never excelled in the raillery of which you speak: they have little encouragement to pursue it in their writings.

Rab. Could they divest themselves entirely of the gross and intemperate satire of which they are so fond, it would, in my opinion, redound considerably to their honour.

Cerv. Is it Rabelais who speaks?—Rabelais, whose wit, though great, was rude and indelicate to a great degree.

Rab. I lived in a rude and indelicate age: in the eighteenth century, perhaps, I should have borne away the palm from every competitor; for my wit, if polished, might show to advantage.

Sterne. I am of another opinion. It was once proposed, I remember, to cover that venerable pile, the *Abbey of Westminster*, with Italian stucco, in order, as the schemer insinuated, to give it beauty: an attempt at refinement in the writings of Rabelais would be equally absurd; it were better that any exceptionable passages should be expunged from the book.

Cerv. A just and proper remark; the wit of Rabelais is exquisite, nearly equal to that of Lucian.

Sterne. And, in true humour, Cervantes surpasses them both.

Cerv. You are surely much too partial to me: could I, indeed, have been relieved from the miseries of a dependent state, that terrible and destructive enemy to the man of genius, I had possibly accomplished greater things.

Sterne. A prison is undoubtedly much more likely to check the natural ardour of genius than to increase it; you, however, rose superior to the frowns of fortune, and to the cabals which were artfully formed against you.

Rab. A proof of greatness and nobleness of mind: an

ordinary man would have sunk beneath the calamities that awaited Cervantes.

Sterne. Right: and it is finely observed by the great Lord Bacon, that "Prosperity doth best discover vice; but that adversity doth best discover virtue."

Rab. Nothing can be more true of mankind in general: it must, however, be admitted, with some exception;—prosperity will frequently set in motion that virtue, which before was locked in "stony fetters;"—virtue willing, but unable, to act.

Cerv. Yes; and adversity will sometimes call forth the latent and hidden seeds of vice. As necessity is, on some occasions, the mother of arts, so is she likewise the parent of crimes.

Rab. Very true: but, my dear associates and fellows in gaiety, into what a strange discourse have we fallen! If, in publishing my book, I could say to the readers of it—

> Voyant le deuil qui vous mine et consomme,
> Mieux est de ris que de larmes escrire,
> Parceque rire est le propre de l'homme.*

Since such, I say, was formerly my language, let me not become a moralizer,—let me not appear a whiner in these days of mirth.

Sterne. Is Rabelais then unable to distinguish between the moralizer and the whiner;—between the man who delivers lessons in virtue and morality, and him who rails at vices in a peevish and querulous strain?

Rab. I stand reproved: but, 'faith, I have been so little accustomed to moralizing; that is, to talk about the cardinal virtues,—though, by the way, I have not forgot to practise them on necessary occasions,—that I may well be fearful of engaging in the matter now: in a word, my system of ethics might be enclosed in a nut-shell,—the quintessence is all I have to boast.

* Verses prefixed to the Œuvres de Rabelais, and addressed "aux lecteurs."

Sterne. And that is surely sufficient: it has frequently been said of me (you may remember) that moral goodness was only in my mouth; I have many times been charged with the vice of hypocrisy.

Cerv. To which charge your good and virtuous deeds have given the lie?

Sterne. Alas! not so: I never had the means; I never had the power of calling my inclinations into action.—An eminent British poet has said, "If our virtues go not forth of us, it is as though we had them not:" from that opinion, however, I must beg leave to dissent; negative virtue is not to be contemned; a principle of honour will at least deter a man from the commission of crimes.

Rab. Certainly: and it has been finely observed, in speaking of the excellency of moral rectitude, that laws were only made to bind the villains of society.

Cerv. Right: and yet it is a melancholy truth, that the villains of society prosper most. Not, indeed, that their malefactions are generally known,—no, although they appear like the innocent flower, they are the serpent lurking under it.

Rab. Once more, a truce with moralizing; it is only in a perpetual *gaiété de cœur* that Rabelais can be truly happy.

Sterne. Were you ever an enemy to sober sadness,—ever lively and enjouée, when on earth?

Rab. Uniformly so: you may remember the motto to my book; hence I gathered the sentiment which served me as a rule in life: "A moi," said I, "n'est qu' honneur et gloire d'être dit et réputé bon gautier et bon compagnon, c'est pourquoi buvez frais, si faire se peut."

Cerv. Vive Paris pour la bonne chère, said Rabelais; Rabelais, *la coqueluche, le tou-tu, des femmes.* Was it not so?

Rab. Certainly: "Madame, ce serait un bien fort utile à toute la république, délectable à vous——" You remember the rest.

Sterne. Perfectly: but, to confess the truth, it savours too much of ribaldry.

Rab. Ha! ha! But it is, no doubt, highly proper that the immaculate Mr. Shandy should become a reprover.

Sterne. My performances are certainly far from spotless; but I was never actually lewd.

Rab. It is scarcely worth contending about: the fact, however, is this, my personages are represented in a state of nature, yours were covered with gauze; but the veil was easily seen through, or as easily drawn aside.

Sterne. Ah! my dear Rabelais, had we but blotted——

Rab. I would not blot a line: they who are squeamish may throw away my book—

Un livre vous déplaît; qui vous force à le lire?—BOILEAU.

Cerv. A truly pertinent remark: 'till *obliged* to read a book, we have certainly no right to complain of its contents; a page or two will at once determine whether it be worthy of an entire perusal or not.

Sterne. Still I say of Rabelais, as has been remarked of Shakspeare, who is reported to have never blotted a line, "I sincerely wish he had blotted a thousand;" the wish extends, at the same time, to my own performances; for I am now sufficiently sensible of their faults.

Rab. You must console yourself with the reflection, that there are many excellent writers who may apply the observation with propriety to themselves.

Cerv. Doubtless you are right; but where is the author to be found who is sensible of his failings, or, at least, ingenuous and modest enough to acknowledge them like Sterne?

Rab. But yet in praising him we seem to forget that he is no longer on earth; when an inhabitant of that dim spot, he had, perhaps, as great a portion of vanity and self-conceit as any of the irritable tribe.

Sterne. Come, come, no more of vanity and self-

conceit; I knew my own consequence, as every able writer does: I only wish that all were equally willing to confess their faults.

Rab. A propos of faults: a charge has lately been brought against you of plagiarism:* what have you to reply to that?

Sterne. Should I not be rather styled an imitator than a plagiary? I believe the passages selected from my writings, and which are brought in support of the charge you speak of, will, when duly considered, appear to be *improvements* on my several originals rather than thefts; which originals, by the way, are certainly far from being mean.

Cerv. A countryman of Sterne's has, I remember, very justly remarked, that "while the literary world can boast of such imitators as Virgil and Tasso, Boileau and Pope, it has no great reason to lament the scarcity of original writers."† Things intrinsically good are frequently to be met with, however rude and unfashioned they may come from nature's mint.—These the judicious observer seizes on with avidity, dresses them to advantage,‡ and thence derives, perhaps, his honour and his fame.

Sterne. Virgil is said to have been accused, even during his lifetime, of borrowing all that is valuable in his Æneid from Homer: the answer that was made by him to such his accusers is preserved by Donatus, and is conceived in terms that must assuredly silence the fastidious critic of every age. We should remember, too, that the ablest critics, both ancient and modern, have entertained nearly the same sentiments respecting imitators as the ingenious author whom Cervantes has thought proper to instance in the matter, particularly Aristotle, Longinus, Warburton, and Hurd.—The last mentioned, I should

* See an Essay in the Transactions of the Society at Manchester.

† See BEATTIE on "Poetry."

‡ True wit is nature to advantage dress'd,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd.—POPE.

observe to you, has advanced some very ingenious and candid remarks touching *resemblances* in distinguished writers, and which every Aristarchus of the present day would do well to consider.

Cerv. It has been farther observed, and, I think, very elegantly, "The imitator of a style should endeavour to be like the original, not with the same exactness as a picture is like the person represented, but as a child resembles the features of its parent: *similem esse te volo quomodo filiam, non quomodo imaginem.*" The pioneers of literature should attend a little to this;—the engineer should learn the use and management of the petard before he attempts to hoist with it;—*imitation* is sure to provoke their censure: they exclaim with Horace, "*O imitatores servum pecus,*" evidently without understanding him; an exclamation, by the way, which I need not here go about to explain, as it has been done already.*

Rab. Criticism can never be properly the employment of boys, though many, I know, have attempted it.—It requires (to say nothing of *genius* in the matter) a very extensive reading, and which years alone can give. These embyro critics have received a gentle, but, as I take it, a silencing admonition from the admirable Lucian, who, in one of his dialogues, says, "Do you pretend to the art of criticism without any previous study? If so, you must have been presented, like the shepherd, with a branch of laurel from the Muses."

Sterne. This is, indeed, witty; not, I must own, in the expression, but in the thought; since it supposes for a moment, that which in a moment we find to be altogether impossible in human affairs; this, we may observe, is the most excellent kind of wit, as it is entirely free from pun.

Cerv. Right; for though we may certainly repeat with the ancient, "*Poeta nascitur non fit,*" we cannot

* See a preceding Dialogue.

say the same of the critic; with him it is precisely the reverse.

Rab. You think we cannot then admit the propriety and justness of Pope's remark in the following lines?

> Thee, great Longinus, all the Nine inspire,
> And fill their critic with a poet's fire.

Sterne. I rather think we may: this is said of the sublimity of his style,—of his expression,—an excellence which certainly is born as well with the critic as with the poet; neither, perhaps, can acquire it by mere dint of industry or art.

Cerv. It has been maintained by an author of no little eminence, that "style is genius;" I do not think his definition altogether wrong.—But walk this way; I perceive the shades of two or three philosophers moving towards us; a race of beings not very friendly to wits.

DIALOGUE XIV.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

Warburton, Theobald, Edwards, *and* Heath.

Warb. Oh, my unlucky star! No less than three of the hypercritics who have done me the honour to pour a torrent of censure on me for my labours in the fields of literature. Ha! here they come with open mouth. The gall, which formerly flowed from their pens, will now, I imagine, be as plentifully distilled from their lips.

Edw. What, Warburton! and have I then caught thee at last—*

* "Dr. Warburton had a name sufficient to confer celebrity on those who could exalt themselves into antagonists; and his notes on Shakspeare have

Heath. Gloster! And is it at length permitted me to drag thee before the dread tribunal of this lower world? Thou murderer—

Warb. Ah! what means this violence, this rage? I am here in danger of losing—I cannot say my life, indeed; but what is of far more importance to me, my fame, my reputation, in the literary world—that which I won on the earthly globe.

Theob. 'Tis lost already. You are held in very little estimation either as a critic or a philosopher; notwithstanding the endeavours of the learned, elegant, and truly amiable Bishop of Worcester, to give you consequence.

Warb. I know that malice and envy have long been rankling in your breast, and now you think to give them vent; but, while you hope to mortify me by this your declaration of the world's opinion of my writings (whether just or not), your purpose is unfortunately defeated even by yourself. He cannot be contemptible, you should remember, either as a philosopher or a critic, whom the learned, elegant, and truly amiable Bishop of Worcester has thought proper to commend.

Edw. A palpable hit, Master Theobald. Warburton has you by inversion, as rhetoricians would call it. Your argument against him makes strongly in his favour.

Warb. What do I hear? A vindication of me from the mouth of Edwards. This is extraordinary, indeed!

Edw. The wit is sunk into the man of candour. Seriously speaking, I buzzed long about you, but could never sting.

raised a clamour too loud to be distinct. His chief assailants are the authors of 'The Canons of Criticism,' and of the 'Review of Shakspeare's Text;' of whom one ridicules his errors with airy petulance, suitable enough to the levity of the controversy; the other attacks them with gloomy malignity, as if he were dragging to justice an assassin or incendiary. The one stings like a fly, sucks a little blood, takes a gay flutter, and returns for more: the other bites like a viper, and would be glad to leave inflammation and gangrene behind him."—JOHNSON, PREF. TO SHAK.

Warb. You astonish me! this, I own, is a candour that I so greatly love.

Edw. Ha! ha! ha!

Warb. Wherefore that intemperate laugh?

Edw. Wherefore? To hear so intemperate a critic as yourself talk of a love of candour. You, to whom, while invested with earthly mould, candour was so little known.

Heath. Your remark, my friend, is just. The Drawcansir-manner of this writer was truly disgusting to "all the judicious." I see but little foundation for his pride. His criticisms, whatever he may think on the matter, have never been considered as dogmas in the world of letters: his positions have never been held as incontestable truths.

Warb. What, envy and malice again at work? "The eagle towering in his pride of place," might perhaps too fatally awaken them. My soaring genius tempted you, poor "mousing owl," to pursue me too near to that sun which proved your destruction. 'Twas not for eyes like yours to encounter its blaze. The glory of it confounded you; and you "toppled down headlong" from the immeasurable height.

Theob. A little humility, a little modesty, my good prelate, were more becoming in you now. But you must acknowledge, whatever may be your opinion of other commentators, that Theobald was able to soar as well as yourself.

Warb. True, when supported by Warburton's wing. I gave you no little consequence by my notes on Shakspeare, which for some time passed for your own: a consequence, however, which, when I had abandoned you as an ingrate, you were unable to maintain. You were found to be a very groveller when left to yourself. You set up, it is true, for an Aristarchus; but with the most absurd pretensions in nature. The compliment of Cæsar to Terence, *dimidiate Menander*, cannot at any time be applied to you.

Theob. And yet, notwithstanding your affected contempt, I have not forgotten that the epithet "ingenious" was bestowed on me, by some of my contemporaries. Living writers, you are very sensible, do not often meet with praise from their brethren, whatever they may receive from other men.

Warb. Ingenious? *Bœoticum ingenium!* They were laughing at you without a doubt. When seriously said, it must have been of the comments which were written by me, and which I allowed you to give to the world in your name.

Theob. Well, I will not murmur; since Heath and Edwards have alike been subject to your invectives——

Warb. Edwards had some degree of merit; yet he, you find, can acknowledge his failing; for, although he was but a mere summer-fly, he would sometimes tingle a little; but, for you—

Heath. A beetle, an absolute drone, in literature.

Warb. Admirable! I shall shortly have the surly Heath to fight my battles.

Heath. Hope not too hastily; a censure of Theobald does not necessarily involve in it a commendation of Warburton. But, that this man should have endeavoured to pass his fustian tragedy, called Double Falsehood, on the world, as the work of Shakspeare, may well awaken my indignation. He, too, one of the dullest of critics.

Warb. Nay, style him not the dullest of critics. There is another commentator on the immortal bard, who surpasses even Theobald in this enviable quality: one who has also been guilty of literary forgeries, and who, like him too, has endeavoured to palm them on the public as the productions of Shakspeare.

Heath. You might likewise have observed that his comments on the poet are nothing but a string of blunders and absurdities.

Warb. He is a critic of nearly the same dimensions as Theobald: or you may rank him with the annotator

on the Roman satirist, who could understand the expression of his author, *stans pede in uno*, in only a literal sense.

Theob. This is really very extraordinary. This language towards a man who—

Warb. Who "dares say"* the public will be charmed with his emendations. But I see one of your admirers: seek him, and you may possibly receive some consolation from his lips; for certainly it may be said of Mr. Theobald, and in his own words, "None but himself can be his parallel."†

Edw. He is gone, and seemingly in anger. Earthly animosities are still subsisting in his bosom. Strange! "I thought," as Macbeth says, "that when the brains were out, the *man* would die." But all the mortal seems still to reign in him.

Warb. Others have vainly endeavoured to build themselves a name on the works of Shakspeare.

Edw. Like unskilful architects, they only mar the edifice they undertake to adorn. But, thanks to fortune, there have been others to stop their clumsy hands, and save the truly noble pile.

Warb. The critic who undertakes to write comments and observations on so great and distinguished a poet as Shakspeare, should, like his master in criticism, Longinus, feel the inspiration of poetry within himself, and catch a spark from the same blaze which illumined the pile.

Edw. Johnson, who was a good and competent judge of merit, was never very lavish in his commendations: in his remark on a truly philosophical explication and correction of a passage in Hamlet, he says—"This is a noble emendation which almost sets the critic on a level with his author." A commendation of which you may be proud.

Warb. I am: for Johnson, as you observe, was niggardly in bestowing his praise.

* See Theobald's Notes on Shakspeare.

† Theobald, "Double Falsehood." See Pope, Mart. Scrib.

Edw. You have just made known to us the qualifications which belong to a critic, and shown what he ought to be by your actual labours. Thus, as has been so happily and forcibly observed of the great rhetorical sophist, "Your own example strengthens all your laws." This is surely the height of the art. To think of improving it, to endeavour to render it more perfect, is "to gild refined gold, to paint the lily." Example is generally more powerful than precept.—"Example strikes where precept fails."—Joined, however, the master-work will be acknowledged by all.

Warb. You are then of opinion that I have attained to excellence in the art of criticism.

Edw. I am; and that you have, in several instances, shown an acuteness and refinement as an annotator, which very few have equalled, various and many as have been the attempts.

Heath. I must beg to observe of Warburton, and I believe it will be generally acknowledged, that, whatever his acuteness and refinement might be, they were by no means lawfully employed. The alterations in the text of his author, the innovations in his expression, call loudly for reprehension from the lovers of Shakspeare. If the annotator is to indulge in conjectural criticism, adieu at once to the original writer. To do it is to arrogate too much to himself: it is forcibly to take place of his superior; a liberty, no more allowable in the literary circle than in the world at large.

Edw. Your pardon, good brother. The original writer cannot possibly be injured while the annotator confines his conjectures to the margin. Criticism, if rightly exercised, is indisputably genius. Authors are not always to be ranked so much above critics as you may perhaps imagine. A celebrated poet says of them—

> Both must alike from Heaven derive their light,
> These born to judge, as well as those to write.

Thus, you perceive a coincidence of opinion on the matter in Warburton and Pope.

Heath. And why are the notions of Pope and Warburton to prevail above all others? Why are they to have the force and obligation of laws?

Edw. Simply because they excel the criticisms of all others: the comments of Warburton, as I have said, are excellent; but it is not from this alone, it is not from his mastery in the art of criticism, neither from his annotations on two of our most distinguished poets, that we are to estimate his abilities, and ultimately to fix his character. In this opinion I am not singular. The like is maintained and elegantly expressed by his learned friend:—"For, after all I have said and think of your critical abilities, it might seem almost as strange in a panegyrist on Mr. Warburton to tell of his admirable criticisms on Pope and Shakspeare, as it would be in him, who should design an encomium on Socrates, to insist on his excellent sculpture of Mercury and the Graces."*

Warb. It is not by turning over black-letter books, in order to find seemingly parallel passages with those in Shakspeare, that he can possibly be explained. Yet this, by the way, has been most ridiculously pursued by many. I say "seemingly parallel passages;" because, though they are actually similar in expression,—yet, by reason of the different significations and acceptations of words, such passages cannot, with certainty, be produced in illustration of each other, but, on the contrary, give rise to innumerable errors. The critic, who would make the "eternal blazon," which so great a poet seems to demand at his hands, must be of a kindred genius and spirit: he must be at once judicious and acute: *Vir maximè limatus et subtilis,* as the Roman orator expresses it. He should, to speak in the language of Akenside, be "tremblingly alive to each fine impulse;" he should himself have the enthusiasm of the poet,—"feel all the god, and live along each line."

Edw. Much still remains for elucidation in Shak-

* Bp. Hurd, *Dedication.*

speare. I hope that they who may attempt to give him clearness will possess the sentiments and feelings of Warburton: and that we shall see no more of those petty commentators, who

> Each dark passage shun,
> And hold their farthing candle to the sun.—YOUNG.

But, see, Theobald is returning towards us, seemingly in an angry mood.

Warb. Away! and leave him to bluster with the winds.

DIALOGUE XV.

SCENE—THE ELYSIAN FIELDS.

SAMUEL JOHNSON *and* RICHARD SAVAGE.

Sav. WELCOME to these eternal realms, my firm old friend and sincere admirer!

Johns. Peace, peace; no more of that: friendship! admiration! the first, we are told, is the virtue, the second, the vice of fools; I have lately been taught to disclaim them both. Has not a nice observer informed us, that men are, generally speaking,—

> Our friends eternal, during interest;
> Our foes implacable when worth their while.

And has not another remarked,—

> In all distresses of our friends
> We first consult our private ends.

Sav. Your pardon, good doctor; these, I conceive, apply to nothing but the deceit of mankind.

Johns. Sir, you are altogether wrong; they apply particularly to the wisdom of human kind; they show it fully: self-interest, or avarice, is unquestionably the main spring in the breast of the provident, and, con-

sequently, the sensible, man; all other passions and affections are regulated by it. Thus it is evident that there can be no lasting friendships but among fools, who, either insensible, or indifferent to their own good, are necessarily to be depended on in whatever professions they may make.

Sav. And yet, in early life, you were not without your friendships?

Johns. True; but I was, at that time, unacquainted with the world. I once conceived friendship to be a type of that bliss which angels enjoy, and rapturously exclaimed, with the ancient philosophers, "This affords as warm an influence as the sun itself; this is the chiefest good." Afterwards, however, I adopted the sentiment of the wary Spaniard, and calmly repeated with him, "Defend me from my friends, and from my enemies I will defend myself." To escape the "heart-ache, and the many shocks that flesh is heir to,—" endeavour to become the favourite of fortune and not of man: it is on this principle that the Frenchman is ever exclaiming, "*Vive la bagatelle!*"

Sav. You renounce the vices, and even the virtues, of the far-famed goddess; you refuse to wear her cap and bells, and yet seem to dwell with satisfaction on her placidities and exemption from cares. You surely mean to enter the lists with Erasmus, and to give, while disclaiming the friendship, another panegyric upon the votaries, of folly: that truly witty writer, I remember, says, "It is folly that both makes friends and keeps them so; I speak of mortal man only: if we pass to the gods we shall find that they have so much of wisdom, that they have very little of friendship; nay, nothing of that which is true and hearty."

Johns. Aye, Sir; and the truth of his positions I will strenuously maintain, as far as mankind are concerned: of the same complexion is the passage in Horace, *Nil admirari*, &c.—

> Not to admire, is all the art I know,
> To make men happy, and to keep them so.—

which means, that the only way to be happy in this life, is to be insensible to every thing that concerns it; to be unmoved in all serious and all momentous events; in other words, "to be a fool." The lines of the Roman satirist have been generally misunderstood; but we now come to our other topic, admiration, which has led a celebrated poet of our own country into the following expression:—

—— Fools admire, but men of sense approve.

But this observation is by no means founded in nature; the Englishman really and seriously believed that the wise man was at no time "to admire;" whereas it is certain that to admire is to approve; the terms are perfectly synonymous, as the reflection of a moment will evince: the vacant stare or the unqualified and blurted exclamation of the fool are, whatever Pope would give us to understand to the contrary, nothing to the purpose.

Sav. Most truly argued: the exclamation you describe is properly wonder; and, though to admire and to wonder are often confounded by the most accurate writers, yet, in their primitive signification, they are totally different.

Johns. Lucian, in his dialogue between Mycyllus and Megapenthes, observes, that the "admiration of mankind is constantly bestowed on what is far-fetched and little known:" does he mean, I would ask you, to speak of the wondering or the approving faculty of man?

Sav. Admiration, as I conceive, can never be employed in any other sense than that of wonder; for, though to admire and to approve are, as you have just observed, precisely the same, it is nothing in respect to the substantive in question, which appears not to belong to the class of verbals, but to be of a distinct and particular root.

Johns. After all, I believe, we must consider the word as being at one time of a simple, and at another of a

complex nature, as sometimes conveying a double kind of meaning: I think that Lucian, in the passage you have cited, used it in this mixed sense. Paterculus has said, "Alit æmulatio ingenia, et nunc invidia, nunc admiratio, incitationem accendit." Emulation is the spur of wit, and sometimes envy, sometimes admiration, quickens our endeavours.—Now here you must perceive and acknowledge that *admiration* is something more than *wonder;* for it is not enough to wonder at a matter to induce us to emulate it; we must, at the same time, approve: many things will awaken our surprise, though they may never move us with any ambition to surpass, or even to equal them.

Sav. Envy, I believe, is far more frequently a spur to glorious undertakings than admiration, understood as you would have it to be; for mankind, however greatly they may admire or approve the excellence of another, very rarely acknowledge it with willingness—especially if the same kind or degree of merit is found in themselves.

Johns. This, indeed, is a disgrace to the literary character: I speak of envy when joined with detraction; or, at least, a determination not to acknowledge the merits of another; for, without this, it is properly emulation, and no way censurable. Voltaire, I remember, thus energetically deplores the circumstance in question: "The rust of envy, the artifice of intrigue, the poison of calumny, the assassination of satire, dishonour among men a profession, which in itself has something really divine." So also do many of our English writers, from whose works I shall repeat two or three passages, in proof of what I have advanced: thus Pope—

> Now those who gain Parnassus' lofty crown,
> Employ their arts to spurn the others down.

So Addison:—"There are many passions and tempers of mind which naturally dispose us to depress and vilify the merit of one rising in the esteem of mankind: those who were once his equals envy and defame him, because

they now see him their superior; and those who were once his superiors, because they look upon him as their equal." Helvetius, in his book *De l'Esprit*, thus expresses himself with respect to the checking a man in his endeavours to excel:—"Détruisez dans un homme la passion qui l'anime, vous le privez au même instant de toutes les lumières; il semble que la chevelure de Samson soit, à cet égard, l'emblême des passions; cette chevelure est-elle coupée, Samson n'est plus qu'un homme ordinaire."

Sav. I recollect a remark of the younger Pliny, recorded by Chancellor Bacon, which, were it duly reflected on, envy would presently be banished from the breast of man—it possesses the highest degree of excellence, and is set forth and commended by Lord Bacon in the following words:—"There is nothing better or more praiseworthy than that which Pliny speaketh of, which is to be liberal of commendation to others in that wherein a man's self hath any perfection; for, saith he, very wittily, 'In commending another you do yourself right; for he that you commend is either superior to you in that you commend, or inferior; if he be inferior, you much more; if he be superior, you much less.'"

Johns. 'Tis singularly just and striking, indeed; I could wish the passage to be generally known and attended to: malevolence is, unfortunately, so common to our kind, that every attempt to teach one man to use fairness and candour towards another is of little avail.—The passions, you know, are not very easily subdued, even by the most excellent lessons in morality and virtue. This precept of the elegant Pliny, however, cannot be sufficiently approved and inculcated: it evinces a truly logical head; but, while bestowing this commendation, the good man must necessarily sigh at the depraved state of human nature, since, generally speaking, we can only be brought to do justice to our fellows from the bare motive of doing, at the same time, right to ourselves.

Sav. There is very little candour and moderation in the world: even, on Pliny's principle, few, I fear, will be willing to exercise those virtues: so great, as you have just observed, is the malignity of man; they will still, I am of opinion, justify the severity of him whom you have styled "a shallow fellow," and who has remarked, in his poem of the Author,—

No crime's so great as daring to excel.

Johns. The reflection is at once both miserable and mortifying: the vice we speak of is one of the most degrading in our nature; but thus, I fear, it will ever be, till reason and philosophy, whose lights, at present, play about us but as coruscations, as glittering yet evanescent meteors, shall break out with a steady and meridian brightness,—when they shall dispel the clouds which we now can scarcely penetrate,—display the beauties of the material world, and teach us to adore the Maker, the great, the glorious, framer of it, whose instruments of knowledge, though he hath been pleased to clothe them in a human form, we are at no time to vilify or contemn.

Sav. You think but meanly of the present times: there are some, on the contrary, who consider this as the age of reason and philosophy.

Johns. I am well acquainted with their contemptible sophisms: the age of reason! Never will I, for a moment, acknowledge it as such, while War, with all his horrid train of evils, is suffered to stalk at large among mankind. If this be really the age of philosophy, 'tis a philosophy that has taught men to become mad.* If this must actually be styled the age of reason, I well may exclaim with the immortal bard—

Who talks of reason?
'Twere better to have none than not enough.

No, never will I own men to be possessed of reason and

* Preach some philosophy to make me mad.—SHAKSPEARE.

philosophy until they shall desist from their ridiculous inquiries into the nature and properties of the heavenly mind; until they shall give over the discussion of all abstract, all metaphysical, questions, and confine themselves to the love of their fellows, rendering, at all times, that assistance to each other which must be highly pleasing in the sight of the Author of the universe.—But yonder are Henry the Fourth of France and his minister, the Duc de Sully, who, you may remember, laid down a plan for a perpetual peace. As war is the most dreadful of all terrestrial calamities, let us walk towards them, and ask their present opinion concerning it: nay, hesitate not a moment; all are here on a perfect level; a duke, or even a king, is no more than Johnson or Savage.

DIALOGUE XVI.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

Pope *and* Churchill (*meeting*).

Pope. The author of the "Rosciad," if I mistake not?

Church. The same.

Pope. The man, whose vanity led him to imagine that he was the first satirist of the age.

Church. Something, perhaps, too much of this; nevertheless, I always admired your genius, and had hoped that my own was no way inferior to it: I was, however, cut off in the spring of life; but had I lived a little longer, it is possible I might have equalled you.

Pope. If, with such slender abilities, you could imagine yourself my equal, might you not entertain the vainer idea of one day excelling me?

Church. Slender abilities! Why truly I had never been engaged in penning moral or didactic essays; neither is there any thing of the pathetic to be found in my writings: your scope was undoubtedly greater than mine, and you have, therefore, received the greater praise; but, in one particular province, that of a satirist, I was, perhaps, your equal.

Pope. A satirist! a lampooner, you should rather say; there is a great difference between a satire and a lampoon.

Church. I care not for the distinction: I lashed the men who had offended me, or whom I happened not to approve.

Pope. Yes, like the furious and frantic Indian, you run full tilt at all; but the business of a satirist is to discriminate, to attack the vice and not the man.

Church. Assuredly there is but little to object to me, on that score; for you may remember that I did not even spare myself.

Pope. True; but you dealt too largely in invective and abuse: the tomahawk and scalping-knife are disgraceful weapons, and are never made use of by a brave and generous enemy.

Church. Could I ever have expected such a reproof from the man who has written the *Dunciad?*

Pope. To hold up ignorance, folly, and pretence to public derision and contempt, is surely to be pardoned, if not commended: we were, no doubt, equally fond of attacking our enemies; mine, however, was nothing more than raillery, yours downright scurrility: Boileau has said—

> Quittons la satire,
> C'est un méchant métier que celui de médire:
> A l'auteur qui l'embrasse il est toujours fatal,
> Le mal qu'on dit d'autrui ne produit que du mal;
> Maint poëte, aveuglé d'une telle manie,
> En courant à l'honneur, trouve l'ignominie.

And I really think him right. Boileau, however, like many others, wrote not according to his own rules; he

is frequently a rude and intemperate railer. Pradon, Quinault, and others, whom he attacks with so much severity (many of whom were in no wise contemptible poets), had never written a line against him. He was always the aggressor; for this he has made an awkward and ridiculous apology in the preface to his works; and it was on account of his satirical humour, that the Duc de Montausier, a man of rigid virtue, so much condemned him, that it was with great difficulty he could be brought to read his poems. The case was widely different with me: I was pestered by a swarm of wasps and hornets, and endeavoured to brush them away.

Church. And yet you descended to personalities, even when there was little provocation; nay, sometimes the very reverse of it,—witness the Lord Timon.

Pope. Agreed: but mine is the operation of the surgeon; yours the stab of the assassin.

Church. The sum of all, I suppose, is this;—you would be considered as the Horace, and rank me as the Juvenal, of our time.

Pope. You the Juvenal of your time! By no means: malice and envy blacken not the pages of the Roman satirist: you sometimes present us with a happy line or two, a forcible or brilliant expression, but they are merely the coruscations of a gloomy mind, meteors that sparkle and presently expire.

Church. You are mighty free of speech; but this, I suppose, is satire, according to your notion.

Pope. Call it what you please; it is certainly not lampooning a man; it savours no way of impertinence or abuse.—He who, by his writings, challenges the public opinion, must patiently abide its censure.—I am speaking of the poetry of Mr. Churchill, and not of himself.

Church. And yet there is, perhaps, more to censure in the man, than in his writings.

Pope. It may be so; but that is not the business of the critic; neither has the satirist, as I have already observed,

any thing to do with particular vices—I mean the vices of individuals.

Church. Then I have entirely mistaken my business: I was accustomed to exclaim, with Shakspeare's Iago, "O! I am nothing if not critical."

Pope. Or rather, as Dr. Johnson explains it, censorious: but you speak ingenuously; you have, indeed, mistaken your business. Your attack on Hogarth, for instance, was wanton and unprovoked; and then to ridicule a man on account of his growing infirmities—such as are consequent of age—what can be more unjustifiable? what more deserving of reprehension?

Church. I feel that your reproof is just: you acknowledge, however, that I had a talent for poetry?

Pope. Certainly; and I really wish it had been better employed: but you are merely the poet of a day; your works will have but an ephemeral existence; and this will ever be the fate of the writer who descends to personality and abuse; whose satire, instead of being general, is particular and confined. Many of the characters proscribed by you, were, even in your own time, little known. Bad writers, I say, are open to our attack.—Bad men are amenable to the laws; if superior to those laws, indeed, they will then deserve the poet's lash.

Church. The "*famosi libelli*" of Charles Churchill, (for so, perhaps, his writings would have been styled in the Augustan age,) will then, in your opinion, be shortly forgotten or disregarded?

Pope. Such is my opinion: the more especially as, in many parts of your poems, it is difficult to discover your meaning; you are sometimes an absolute Persius for obscurity.

Church. My poem of the *Ghost* is, I must admit, a little obscure; indeed, the circumstance that gave rise to it was a very ridiculous one, and perhaps wholly unworthy the attention of a writer of abilities.

Pope. The subject is, in truth, sufficiently comtemptible; you should have left it to some Grub-street poet.

Church. I now wish I had; but I wrote to live,—while of you, it may be said, that you only lived to write!

Pope. That, indeed, may account for your failure; but I never imagined you were an author who must, as Boileau observes—

Attendre, pour dîner, le succès d'un sonnet.

Church. It was not unfrequently my case; though I should, at the same time, acknowledge, that it was principally occasioned by extravagance.

Pope. The ordinary vice of wits and poets, and of which they appear to be not a little proud: but why a literary character must be a libertine, or why he must be improvident and careless of his fortune, I have never been able to discover.

Church. His improvidence and carelessness are studied; they are entirely the effect of vanity: he has heard that a great genius is ever inattentive to pecuniary matters,—and is, therefore, a coxcomb and a spendthrift; not by nature, but by imitation.

Pope. Truly ridiculous conduct, indeed; it manifests, moreover, a considerable want of spirit, as such men are repeatedly under the necessity of being troublesome to their friends.

Church. I can only regret, at the present day, that I weakly adopted principles so justly reprobated and contemned.

Pope. Enough of this. Let us retire, for yonder are two of our brethren.

DIALOGUE XVII.

Scene—A Field.

Mercury *and a* Sportsman.

Sportsm. Tally ho! ho! yoics! yoics!

Merc. You seem a very happy gentleman.

Sportsm. The happiest fellow in Christendom, Sir. Do but look at my hounds. Did you ever behold a finer, a more beautiful pack?

Merc.

Lusus animo debent aliquando dari,
Ad cogitandum melior ut redeat sibi.

Sportsm. How say you, good Sir?

Merc. "The mind ought sometimes to be diverted, that it may return the better to thinking."

Sportsm. Thinking!

Merc. Yes, thinking. Pray, Sir, may one be allowed to inquire how you usually pass your time?

Sportsm. O, in the pleasantest manner imaginable. In running down foxes, laying snares for hares, bantering country bumpkins, ruining country maids, drinking bumpers, and breaking down our neighbours' fences.

Merc. A very agreeable manner, indeed! But have you nothing more in view,—nothing else of importance in pursuit?

Sportsm. Yes. We have sometimes the deer in view; and not unfrequently pursue the stag.

Merc. You exercise the body, indeed; but have you no way of exercising the mind,—no particular studies?

Sportsm. Oh! yes; we study backgammon, hunt the slipper, and all-fours; raise the devil, and play at blind-man's buff. Aye, and I am a tolerable dab at them, too, I can tell you.

Merc. Delightful amusements, indeed! Charming accomplishments, I must confess!

Sportsm. Yes, yes; but nothing like the chase—

What can equal the joys of the field?

[*Sings, and is going.*

Merc. But have you never any fear that Death may overtake you in the chase?

Sportsm. Not I, indeed. He is a lover of cities and populous towns, and seldom shows his head among us jovial fellows.

Merc. He is often prowling, nevertheless, about the forest here: and, in a little time, if I mistake not, will pay you a visit uncalled.

Sportsm. Well, let him come. He will meet with his match in me. I will wrestle with him for what he dares.

Merc. It is the privilege of youth to boast. But you will assuredly get a fall.

Sportsm. Not I, indeed. I am another Hercules, I tell you, for strength; can pitch the bar, and throw the best fellow living within twenty miles.

Merc. Alas! alas! the strength of Hercules and Atlas combined, would be as a reed against the force and power of Death: he was never yet overthrown.

Sportsm. I am of a very different opinion. He attacked me several years ago, like a coward as he is, in disguise, and I beat him.

Merc. In disguise! True, he can assume as many shapes as Proteus. But how did he appear to you then?

Sportsm. In the shape of a consumption. Did the wily monster think to worm me out of my life? But I gave him the slip, you see. Look at me now, and observe the effect of the physic of the fields.

Merc. You are certainly very robust; but, when a fever rages in your veins—

Sportsm. Ah! mercy on me, what a pang! Help me, my friends, or I die.

Merc. O, ho! young Sir. So you begin to feel the sting of him you deride? Where are all your boastings and vapourings now?

Sportsm. Oh! these pangs! I now feel that I have been to blame: but spare me, spare me a little longer, and I will henceforth reverence the immortal gods, whom I have so greatly offended, and whose will I have attempted to dispute.

Merc. Those offended powers comply with your request. Away! and, in proportion as your life is valuable to you, strive to mend it: but remember, and challenge not Death again; lest he should enter the lists armed with that dart, against which no mail is proof.

DIALOGUE XVIII.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

Furax *meeting* Rapax.

Fur. Rapax! Do I see aright? The youthful Rapax, whom I so lately left in the upper world, and in a state of Asiatic splendour.—Rapax, on whom both rich and poor have gazed in wonder and mute astonishment at his inordinate wealth, which was acquired by his indefatigable sire?

Rap. Wherefore your surprise at seeing me here? Do you suppose, my honest fellow, that wealth, or even youth, can be a defence against the arrow of Death?

Fur. Such were not my thoughts. I was merely reflecting on your "few brief years," and, consequently, evinced a little surprise at the unexpected stroke which has sent you to the shades. But, by the epithet honest,

which you now bestow upon me, you have surely forgotten Furax—the wretched, the unfortunate man who, in a moment of desperation and want, deprived you on the highway of a paltry sum! and whom, in the severity of your justice, you brought to the fatal tree—a sum, by the way, which, in your convivial hours, you would have bestowed on a buffoon or a parasite, however base, and unworthy of your aid.

Rap. I had, indeed, entirely forgotten you; so distant were we placed from each other by the hand of fortune when on earth.

Fur. Now, however, we are equals. I have been tried by Minos, that most equitable judge; and my virtues have been found so far to out-balance my vices, that I am admitted to the joys of the Elysian fields.

Rap. Well, then, here let all animosities subside: and as we are now equals, so let us be friends.

Fur. Resentment would certainly avail me nothing here; yet, when I reflect on your barbarity—

Rap. But why address me thus, and in a tone of indignation and reproach? He who transgresses against the laws of his country, is unquestionably amenable to them. You proceeded with a sense of the attendant danger in your affair with me: you knew the consequence which must inevitably follow, in case you were brought to trial and convicted of the offence.

Fur. I knew it, certainly, too well: but can reason be found in madness? I acknowledge, indeed, that it will sometimes appear in the arguments of the maniac; but never, I believe, is it to be seen in his actions. I was frantic and furious, from repeated wrongs. Laws, divine as well as human, were, I fear, at that time, wholly disregarded by me.

Rap. You attempt to argue from false and mistaken principles; you would awaken pity for individual sufferings, without attending to the general safety, or adverting to the public good.

Fur. Can the general safety be ensured by the

sacrifice of a few miserable objects to the vengeance of the laws? Can the public good be promoted by a lavish expenditure in securing punishment for the guilty, when half the money so employed would, perhaps, suffice for holding out encouragement to the distressed?*

Rap. You are of opinion, then, that the penal laws of certain countries should, in part, be abolished: that they are sanguinary and disgraceful to a state. In imitation of the Porcian law, you would, perhaps, inflict on none but murderers the punishment of death. But will not this, by many, be called weakness; and will not weakness (or, as you would term it, mildness,) in a government necessarily lead to the perpetration of crimes?

Fur. Not when the beauty of virtue is displayed as it ought to be: not when moral goodness is inculcated and generally known. The mischiefs which are so commonly experienced, and the offences which are so frequently committed, proceed, in most instances, I am persuaded, from ignorance; which is the parent and the nurse of vice. The Porcian edict, of which you have just spoken, and which ordained that no Roman citizen should be put to death, was not, you may remember, productive of any ill consequences to the state. Thus much for lenity in a government, and its effects on the minds of men. But what I would principally insist on is this,—let a good and a virtuous education be given to the people, and there will scarcely be occasion for penal laws: continue to behave towards them as the statutes of former times have directed—times comparatively barbarian with the present—and you punish them for actions, the turpitude of which they hardly know. Cruel and inhuman are the givers of such laws; and I boldly maintain, that they who thus proceed towards their indigent and mistaken fellows, are the greater criminals in the sight of

* This subject has been touched on in a former dialogue; but, as it cannot be too frequently urged, I shall not apologize for introducing it here.

Heaven, and more particularly deserving of earthly reproach.

Rap. If the plan could be adopted, and a public education were ultimately to put a stop to the commission of crimes, it would, no doubt, in a moral point of view, be deserving of particular praise: politically considered, however, I fear the objections to it would be many and great.

Fur. If I understand you aright, you argue that the people, by learning to distinguish between right and wrong, and by the exercise of that most discriminative faculty, reason, would soon know themselves to be men, and with such intellectual advantages might become a little troublesome to the ruling powers.

Rap. Perhaps so: and, by this means, stir up sedition and revolt. As a philosopher, you may be right in what you propose, but you cannot possibly be so as a politician. The lesser evil, indeed, and which you so feelingly deplore, might perhaps be remedied: but the greater one, and which I so seriously dread, would be seen in all its terrors. In fine, you would scatter firebrands among the nations; and, when the injury is manifest, you would perhaps attempt to exculpate yourself, by saying, with the madman, you were in sport.

Fur. Away with all such narrow, such contemptible, prejudices! Perish the sentiment which would debase mankind, which would bring them to a level with the beasts of the field. Shall the people be blinded, that they may the better keep clear of pitfalls? shall a want of knowledge the better secure to them their happiness and peace? A negative kind of happiness at best!

> Can it be sin to know,
> And must they only stand by ignorance?—PAR. LOST.

But be it remembered, that men in power, of whatever country, would do well to provoke inquiry into their measures, instead of endeavouring to avoid it. If their politics be sound and good, they will, like the doctrines of Christianity, be received and cherished by almost all.

In a word, the closer the examination, and the stricter the scrutiny into those politics, the more, in such a case, will it contribute to their permanency, and redound to their fame.

Rap. The consequences, so generally resulting from the people meddling in affairs of government, I mean not to insist on now. In ancient history, indeed, the instances are many and fatal. We find that the multitude are frequently ambitious, without the power of conducting themselves aright. They remind me of the serpent in the fable, which, desirous of travelling, but despising the guidance of its head, observed a backward, a retrograde motion, and thus went blundering the whole of its way.

Fur. The character you give of the commonalty I allow to be just. But still I recur to the want of proper instruction in their earlier years, and feel convinced, that the very education which meaner politicians are fearful of bestowing on the people, would be at once the great security of themselves—for I will willingly suppose them virtuous—and of the state to which they belong. Plutarch is a strenuous advocate for it; and attributes the seditious and turbulent temper of the Romans, in what is called the looser times of the empire, to a remissness in the education of children, and which contributed much to the ruin of the commonwealth. Latter historians, too, have animadverted sharply on that government for this so shameful a neglect of its citizens: the consequences of which, say they, were the corruption and decay of morality, the almost total extinction of letters, a very heavy blow on the before-mentioned glorious fabric, and which greatly accelerated its fall.

Rap. This were all very well, could we mould men according to our wishes, or to the ideas of perfection which are to be found in the writings of certain moralists and speculatists of the times. Our criminal laws are undoubtedly severe; but to abolish them, or even to relax in them, in the present corrupted state of the

world, were to leave our property exposed to every marauder. It is remarked, indeed, by an ancient philosopher, that the wise man would always live virtuously, even were there no restraints on his actions, even were there a total abrogation of every law. This is certainly the language of philosophy; further, perhaps, it is the language of humanity: but is it founded on actual observation, or in truth? I must know more of the force of philosophy, I must see more of the integrity of wisdom, before I can accede to the propriety of the remark, before I can admit it as a general principle, and thus divest myself at once of my guard. No; we must not throw away the buckler of the law, while envy and malice are prowling around like fiends, which are ever watchful and ready to seize on us as their prey.

Fur. Envy and malice are, I believe, more frequently to be found in the higher classes of the people than in that to which I allude, and to which I unfortunately belonged. But, if these hateful and destructive passions are sometimes to be seen among the lower orders of the community, in what, it may be asked, have they originated? Why, the one perhaps in the glittering parade, the other in the insufferable arrogance of the sons of fortune; who, while they talk of pity, do actually, by the hard conditions they impose on their tenants and others, distress the very persons whom, not only in justice but in policy, they ought to favour in every point. Hear how pathetically this disposition and conduct of the powerful is spoken of by a distinguished moralist and writer of the age:—"C'est là (dans les chaumières du pauvre) qu'on s'instruit par quelles iniquités secrètes le puissant et le riche arrachent un reste de pain noir à l'opprimé qu'ils feignent de plaindre en public." Now what are we to think of such men? We must surely hold them in little estimation or regard; and were it not for the exertions of the meaner ranks, of those whom they consider as their retainers, (though, in fact, the very reverse,) the luxuries they indulge in

would never have been known; for, as to themselves, they are incapable of almost every kind of effort: with immoderate possessions, indeed, the powers both of body and mind are observed to decay.

Rap. From your manner of speaking, I know not in what point of view you consider the luxuries and superfluities you hint at, and which are so much indulged in by the rich and great. In what way do they affect the people? are they really beneficial or hurtful to them? Remember, I advert to the labouring part of the people, who compose by far the most numerous class.

Fur. It has been maintained by able writers, that luxury is greatly beneficial to a state; and this idea has arisen principally from the employment given by it to artists and manufacturers of every kind. The argument made use of by those writers is certainly specious, and, as far as it regards our home commodities, I acknowledge it to be just. A few restrictions, however, might be necessary even here, when we consider the pernicious influence of luxury on many, particularly the middling ranks of life: in a word, its universality is baneful in the highest degree, not only, as I have just observed, to many who indulge in it, but also as it draws off an amazing number of hands to produce the superfluities so generally demanded; hands, which might be much better engaged in agricultural pursuits, and from which considerable benefit would be derived to all. As to the foreign articles which are pouring in upon us, and often to the exclusion of our own, in seeing them I nearly lose my temper, and am induced to exclaim with the poet—

> O, luxury! thou curst by Heaven's decree.

The merchant, it is true, is enriched, and the exchequer is swelled, by their means. But, let us consider the poverty, the squalid wretchedness, which is to be seen in our streets; and this, too, among the young and healthy, who, were a greater quantity of specie kept in

circulation at home, might be honestly and advantageously employed; not only to themselves, but to the nation at large, particularly in the cultivation of lands which are now lying waste—a painful, a miserable object in the eyes of the friend of man! It should, at the same time, be observed, on the other hand, that the use of commons has, by long prescription, been considered by the poor as a right, almost indefeasible: yet, in a different order of things, the loss would not be felt by them. A compensation might easily be made for this, such as a grant of some few acres of land; while other and far greater good would certainly and speedily accrue to all.

Rap. Earthly magnificence being lost to me, I can now, with you, consider general luxury as destructive to general prosperity, and even wish that a remedy could be safely and effectually applied. But still, if any restraint is to be laid on it, if it is not allowed to be general, in what manner, we may ask, is it to be regulated? Not by the criterion of income; since the man of one thousand pounds per annum may be richer, that is, he may have more to expend in superfluities, than another with double that sum: the latter perhaps has the necessary expenses of a family to answer, while the former has only to make disbursement for himself. How then are we to put a stop to the evil? whom shall we mark out for the operation of the law which may be made against it? Where, I say, shall we place the boundary; where draw the distinguishing line?

Fur. The matter is well deserving of attention. But, alas! even the energy and spirit of a Rousseau, an Helvetius, and other the like distinguished philosophers and friends of the human race, who have painted, in glowing colours, man, not only as he is, but as he ought to be; they, who have laboured in their writings to rouse the children of affluence and power from the torpor which has unfortunately seized them;—even they, I say, have been unable to animate and awaken them to

a sense of the miseries which luxury too certainly brings on a considerable portion of the people; for, as something like envy is naturally excited in these at the view of "profusion which they must not share," they endeavour, though without the means, to vie with the more fortunate few in splendour, and are ruined by their misconduct and vices: some are driven for their debts within the walls of a prison, while others are brought for their crimes to an ignominious end.

Rap. Rulers of a state will tell you, that, by instancing philosophers and moralists in affairs of government, you will only pull down ridicule on your head: that the theoretical notions of these men are as nothing when opposed to the practical schemes of politicians, by which the coffers of the kingdom are filled.

Fur. If statesmen could thus wantonly and barbarously reason, we should surely disclaim them by a general voice: but I will not think thus contemptibly of them. If they err, I am willing to believe that it is from prejudices and mistaken opinions, and acquit them wholly of intentional injury, or deliberate wrong.

Rap. Like to the men whose opinions of governments you seem to have adopted, you would, no doubt, prefer the simplicity of primitive times to all the refinements and elegancies which are to be found at the present day. I remember that one of the most distinguished of these has observed—"Dans les pays policés, l'art de la législation n'a souvent consisté qu'à faire concourir une infinité d'hommes au bonheur d'un petit nombre; à tenir, pour cet effet, la multitude dans l'oppression, et à violer envers elle tous les droits de l'humanité." . . . . . "J'avoue qu'il est bien étonnant que tant de formes différentes de gouvernement, établies du moins sous le prétexte du bien public; que tant de loix, tant de réglemens, n'aient été, chez la plupart des peuples, que des instruments de l'infortune des hommes." If the picture be faithful, our reflections on it must be painful indeed!

If the representation be really just, we must reprobate the authors of such complicated ill.

Fur. Alas! the wretched and miserable state of political society. Happy, comparatively happy, the situation of the ungoverned savage, whose condition were the rather to be envied: for, as the poet has remarked—

> Chez eux tout est commun, chez eux tout est égal:
> Comme ils sont sans palais, ils sont sans hôpital.

Rap. You should, however, recollect that the happiness of the savage consists, not so much in any positive good as in the absence of evil. He is virtuous and honest, not perhaps from principle, but because he has no temptation to be guilty of wrong. "Ils sont sans palais:" yet, were he resident in the regions of splendour, he would possibly become, in many instances, equally criminal with those whom we now condemn.

> Manners with fortunes, humours change with climes,
> Tenets with books, and principles with times.

To sum up all in a word, the man of nature is unquestionably in a state of ignorance; and, in such a state, according to your own position, the more prone must he be to vice. Such, indeed, were your former sentiments, but which you now appear to have forgotten.

Fur. The question of ignorance, and probably of consequent vice, and which I started some little time ago, you consider too largely. I mean not to insinuate that the happiness of the savage proceeds from any exclusively, or peculiarly, virtuous propensities. Physically considered, all men, we must remember, are the same. I assume, however, that he is happy, from the single circumstance of his being out of the reach of oppression. As to the ignorance of man in a natural, and man in a civilized state, it is of a totally different complexion in each: in the latter it must be looked on as a kind of vice, in the former as a species of virtue. This brings me back to my original subject, the want of proper

education in the mass of the people, and the pains inflicted on them on their deviation from right. Now, I must further observe, that, by thus neglecting our fellow-men, we first render them criminal (for, from not having a sense of morality, from not knowing the duty of man to man, they proceed, perhaps, to the height of wickedness): we first make them criminal, I say, and then, in our wisdom and goodness, punish the offences they may be guilty of, with a severity at which unsophisticated nature cannot fail to shudder. What wretched infatuation! What contemptible weakness! We at once become enemies to others and to ourselves. I shall possibly be told, that justice must not be diverted or impeded in its course. "Justice!" "Justice!" is the common cry. But I am clearly of the opinion of Sir Thomas More, however paradoxical it may appear to many, that "extreme justice is an extreme injury." Yet, you will still say, from the many robberies committed, that we frequently suffer considerably in our fortunes. Agreed: and which, therefore, unless we must entirely lose sight of humanity, we should, I once more repeat, study not so much to punish as to prevent.

Rap. Montesquieu, although he observes that "it is a great abuse to condemn to the same punishment a person that only robs on the highway, and another that robs and murders," is yet inclined to think favourably of England, where the law speaks to that effect, and where it is thought by you to be so very "biting." "In that country," says he, "there is some expectation of pardon: robbers, at least, have hopes of transportation, and therefore they never murder on the highway."—The power with which the monarch is invested, and which, indeed, is frequently exercised by him, prevents, he thinks, the perpetration of the higher crime.

Fur. This takes nothing from the letter of the law: this diminishes in no sort its severity. The prince, it is true, has thus an opportunity of showing his clemency: but this particular power, which, abstractedly

considered, may, by some, be called an excellence in the constitution, is, in fact, a material defect. In a land of liberty the people should look up to nothing but the laws. The very expectation of pardon induces to thievery. Pains and penalties should ever be proportioned to offences; but, once determined on, they ought not to be remitted in any case. To escape from punishment should be impossible to all. Further, you must allow me to observe, that this modification, if so I may term it, of punishment, unhappily leads to error and abuse. I shall, perhaps, be told by you, as I might by others, that, while the sovereign has the power of pardoning only, and not of punishing, no abuses can possibly be let in: but this, while the law of the land is confessedly cruel, must be pronounced an absolute sophism. When, by a regular and judicial process, an offender is condemned to death, he may suffer that penalty, however slight his offence, or he may be saved, however atrocious it may be, according to the pleasure of the prince. Thus, on a little reflection, you will find, that, in this particular, too much depends on his will, and this prerogative I do not hesitate to call a fault in the constitution. Mercy is justly styled of heavenly essence; it is considered, too, as the first, the most distinguished, attribute of sovereignty: and in criminal matters, I again repeat,—mercy should be wholly in the laws.

Rap. Mercy is unquestionably no longer such, if it be blindly, or unwisely, applied. When the emperors Maurice, Anastasius, and Angelus engaged not to punish any crime whatever with death, they mistook the character and quality of this super-human excellence: and so far from attaining to what they had proposed, they proved themselves to be really unmerciful; more so, perhaps, than the judgments of the present day, against which you so loudly and vehemently declaim.

Fur. You still refuse to admit my opinions as to the proceedings of criminal courts. You think, I believe, with many, that any attempt at alteration, in the affairs

either of church or state must be dangerous, and that it is therefore to be avoided in every case. A timidity that certainly precludes us from numberless comforts and advantages, which, independently of the present object, we earnestly covet, but which we have not the resolution to endeavour to gain. The president Montesquieu, whose writings you seem to approve, has very pertinently asked, in speaking of excessive punishments—"Are the people mended or deterred, or are they not rather hardened by the continual sight of them?" By this we may perceive, that mildness in punishments is what he would contend for in every case that circumstances will admit.

Rap. I readily acknowledge that excessive punishment, where the infliction of it is certain, will often be productive of the most dreadful effects. In Russia, where the highwayman is sure to be punished with death, he, in robbing, always murders. "*The dead tell no tales.*" Here we discover inefficacy, want of wisdom, and, perhaps I may be suffered to add, a vice in the laws of this once insignificant, but now famed and powerful state. If, in England, the party attacked is seldom destroyed, it is less, perhaps, in the robber's expectation of pardon, than that the people in general are by no means ferocious or sanguinary. However wicked some few individuals may be found, however abandoned in many respects, and although, on the principle of the Russ, they might, by murdering, the better give security to themselves, their nature is such as to recoil at that most dreadful and heinous act.

Fur. This native goodness of heart should be encouraged by every possible means. The majority of the people of Britain experience many and daily increasing distresses; and if, amid these distresses, they evince a kind of generous disposition, even in the very plundering of us, what ought we not to do to relieve them, to reconcile them, in short, to the world and to themselves? The endeavour were noble and praiseworthy, and the

effecting of that work of grace would be to erect an everlasting monument to our name.

Rap. But it would be attended, I think, with imminent danger. Were the terror of death removed from the criminal, robberies would surely multiply in an alarming degree.

Fur. This apprehension, which you entertain of a certainly not inhuman or incorrigible people, may easily be done away. I have already hinted at their miseries. If they must be ever deserted by those who are styled their governors, I know not but that you may be somewhat right in your remark; but, while I contend for remission in the punishment of the guilty, I as earnestly sue for succour in the distresses of the good: comparatively, the former are extremely few: let us then hinder the latter from adding to the number in a paroxysm of despair, which may well be attendant on the indigent man. I could wish, indeed, to have it observed of England, as of some of the states of Greece. "At Athens," says Isocrates, "no citizen ever died of want, or begged in the streets to the dishonour of the community." As to institutions for an occasional or temporary relief of the poor, I wholly condemn them, both in principle and practice. It is only by a permanent establishment (and which would be the natural consequence of industry), that either themselves or a nation can be benefited. The indigent are unable to attempt the bettering of their condition; therefore, in every well-ordered government, instead of loading the unfortunate with contumely and reproach, employment should be found for them in every case. In England, for instance, ten times the present number of inhabitants might be provided for with the greatest ease, and according to their several abilities or merits. By the most trifling exertions, on the part of the state, happiness and prosperity would be seen throughout the land.

DIALOGUE XIX.

SCENE—THE ELYSIAN FIELDS.

COMICUS, TRAGICUS, *and* MIMUS.

Trag. (*meeting Com.*) WHEREFORE that sorrowful countenance? From your look and manner, I might suppose that you had assumed my character and office, or entirely thrown aside the sock.

Com. I have, indeed, attempted, on particular occasions, to wear the buskin, but the privilege is absolutely denied to me. At the present day, comedy is not permitted, even in a single instance, to "raise her voice," though nothing could be more becoming in her. All is buffoonery, pantomime, and show.

Trag. Alas! the unfortunate day! The example of Terence and the precepts of Horace are then of no avail?

Com. The example of nature and the precepts of reason are equally disregarded by the *mauvais plaisans* of the times, who affect a contempt for every thing that is serious or instructive, when delivered from the stage.

Trag. That I already know; for my productions have long been banished from the scene; nor have all the trappings of the theatre, the gorgeous attire, the mos t splendid decorations, and all the common allurements to which they have recourse in order to please the eye, been able to gain me a hearing for many years. "Salutary woe," which might well awaken the finest affections of the soul, is mocked at, and treated with a ridicule, at once disgraceful to our nature and our name.

Com. Such a conduct were inexcusable, even had it been to make place for "useful mirth." But nothing

of the kind is now to be found; for folly has usurped the dominion we once enjoyed, and obtained an almost universal sway.

[*Mimus overhearing them, comes forward.*

Mim. Ha! and are there then no ingenuous spirits remaining on the earth, who will boldly insist on the rights of personages who partake of the essence of superior natures, and who, in many instances, teach men more than philosophy herself?

Trag. Hey-dey! shall Mimus, the protector, and tutelary deity of buffoons and jesters, become a reprover of the ways of man? Is it Mimus, I ask, who would throw aside the mask of mummery, and plead in favour of nature and sense?

Mim. The same: he who, weary of the follies and fopperies of the world, would willingly forget them all, nay even himself, in the society of beings formed, as you undoubtedly are, to improve and refine the age.

Com. Indeed! is this spoken in the sincerity of your heart, or are you but using the language of your profession, and, by an ill-timed pleasantry, endeavouring to raise a laugh against us?

Trag. Mimus, we feel your triumph over us, and confess the public has given a countenance and support to your licentiousness, of which you may perhaps be vain; and yet it is hoped that you can be generous in your exalted state; that you can look without contempt on fallen greatness; and do not come "to mock our miseries."

Mim. Hold! your expressions savour too much of the mockery and ridicule you would condemn in me: on my part, however, you have nothing to fear, for I am not here in my mimetic capacity.—But if I am the protector of the droll and the mimic, you should remember that the performances of the modern farces are very different from the *atellanes* of the Romans, and more so from the *mimes* of the Greeks. These, we are told, were rude and intemperate satires,—particularly the latter, which often exhibited a ribaldry of the grossest kind. But

nothing of this sort is to be found in the farces of the present day, and, consequently, they lie not open to your censure.

Trag. If the writers, whom you at present *inspirit*, are not so licentious as those of ancient times, they are equally at variance with nature and truth,—they are equally heteroclite in the dramatic art: their offspring, it is true, can boast of sufficient life and motion; but the motion is, unfortunately, retrograde: their deviations are many; but, alas! they never "deviate into sense."*

Mim. Both Comicus and yourself are too severe; you are much too partial to your particular provinces: I, you may perceive, am of a liberal mind, and can freely acknowledge not only your excellencies, but my own defects; but, while you are thus satirical, you should recollect that there are different kinds and degrees of merit; whatever is not superlatively good, is not by a necessary consequence bad: "Tous les genres sont bons," says the judicious Voltaire, "hors le genre ennuyeux;" and an admirable critic has farther observed: "Pour bien juger d'une production, il ne faut pas la rapporter à une autre production. Ce fut ainsi qu'un de nos premiers critiques se trompa." These remarks, my friends, are deserving of attention; keep them, I pray you, in remembrance, and fancy not that every perfection is centred in yourselves.

Com. And art thou really displeased at our freedom of speech? Canst thou expect a different language from the admirers of the theatrical sisters,—the heaven-born Melpomene and Thalia? Thou who art of a base and degenerate stock,—an usurper of the Muses' seat?

Mim. From sneering, I find, you would willingly proceed to invective: the name of usurper, however, belongs not to me; but, if my consequence with the

* Others to some faint meaning make pretence,—
But Shadwell never deviates into sense.—DRYDEN.

people excites your envy, you should consider that it has not been forced: if I am placed "high on a gilded chair," and my situation is loftier than my actual merits entitle me to, you should remember that I have been called to it by the public voice, from whose decision there is no appeal.

Trag. True; too true: capricious, infatuated public! "O, thou fond many!" thinkest thou that I have forgotten the "loud applause" with which thou wert wont to receive me? The poet has truly said—

> An habitation giddy and unsure
> Hath he that buildeth on the vulgar heart.

Mim. You should ever bear in mind, that, in the world of letters, republican rules can alone be admitted; that the place of honour must ever belong to merit,—which, by the way, I do not assume to myself.

Trag. Admitted: both Comicus and myself, then, may surely lay claim to places of honour, on the score of merit; for to any other claim, a very Zany can scarcely pretend.

Mim. Your merits I readily acknowledge, whatever you may deny to me; for, as I before took occasion to observe, I look up to you as my superior natures. With respect to myself, I have been led into some vaunting expressions by reason of the contemptuous language with which you have been pleased to greet me, but which I shall never be provoked to return.—Your merit, I acknowledge, is manifest—for you have severally excelled in your art,—but that of your followers I have yet to find.

Trag. Strange that you should thus plead against yourself: not a follower of Thalia, too, and an humble imitator of her enchanting art?

Mim. I follow not the higher comedy, and, therefore, cannot properly be called an imitator in Thalia's art: the business of the queen of smiles is not only to amuse, but to instruct; while mine, with a due attention to *les bienséances,* is merely to awaken mirth; sometimes,

I must own, by dint of absurdities,—at other times by the force of humour, and, it may be, by wit.

Com. You speak with ingenuousness and candour: but, if you so frequently please by absurdities, the pretender to comedy is equally happy; for such, according to the modern nomenclature, is the designation of certain performances intended to rival mine.

Trag. Nay, that the authors are comical you will scarcely deny: this, their pantomime tricks, by the help of closets, screens, and trap-doors, together with the grimace and contortion of visage required of their actors, will sufficiently prove.—*Risum teneatis?*—But the object proposed by the writer is obtained, and that, we may conclude, is enough.

Com. Extravagance of manner may occasionally provoke to laughter as much as either genuine humour or wit; but that is rather the merit of the player than of the poet. I have known the house in a roar at the assumed awkwardness of two of the characters of a play, who, on quitting the stage, have jostled each other with such seeming violence as to be in danger of meeting with the same disaster as that of Mr. Bayes, who, you may remember, in showing his antics, unfortunately fell and broke his nose. But many will, no doubt, tell you, with that gentleman, "these are the little things that set you off a play;" and, we must admit, that his original device of improving a scene by means of a "petticoat and a colic," is comparatively trifling with what has since been introduced on the stage.

Trag. This degeneracy among your pupils, joined to the vitiated taste of the age, must afflict you greatly; and I no longer wonder at the air of melancholy which so frequently overshadows your brow.

Mim. The genius of comedy will, no doubt, droop under unmerited and repeated slights; but the powers of genius will again be felt and acknowledged: the "ecstasies of mirth," and the "luxuries of grief," can never wholly pass away.

Com. The "joy of grief" I can readily conceive; and the true disciple of Melpomene must know it. "Laughter, holding both his sides," is now very rarely to be seen in the genuine productions of my school: for true humour, I must observe to you, is ever without vulgar grimace, while it excites in its auditors merriment. That, therefore, which is excessive, belongs, I repeat, to an inferior province of the drama; not that I would, at any time, affect the serious manners, or the studied sententiousness, of a Fontenelle, a Diderot, or a La Chaussée; but still it is my particular desire to maintain a suitable dignity in the sight of the world; and, while I am contributing to the pleasures of the public, I would not forget that it is the business of the dramatist—

> To set before 'em
> A grace, a manner, a decorum.

Trag. This, indeed, is the real character and the distinguishing excellence of comedy,—but of which the common laughers in our theatres appear not to have the smallest idea. Low humour, and which, as you have well observed, should be peculiar to farce, was the great failing of the otherwise judicious Jonson: this, too, was the vice of Molière, the first comic poet among the French; he, however, will always be admired; but had the judgment and manners of Cæcilius, Afranius,* or Terence, been united with his humorous talent, what an inimitable writer would he have been!

Mim. True: but these opposite perfections are very rarely to be found in one and the same writer. The ancients, whom you instance, on account of urbanity of manners, were wholly deficient in humour;—the true *vis comica* was utterly unknown to them all; even Aristophanes is more of a satirist than a comic poet. Smart and delicate raillery, too, has been entirely reserved for (comparatively speaking) modern times: I speak not altogether of the present day.

* This is advanced of these two writers on the authority of Cicero and Quinctilian.

Com. This true *vis comica,* this fine and delicate raillery, however, is not to be considered as a positive excellence or defect in either class. In earlier ages, the greater uniformity of the human character must necessarily occasion a kind of monotony in writers for the stage: the absence of humour, therefore, in their productions is not to be considered as a defect; neither, as I have before observed, is the frequent recurrence of it, in our modern poets, to be held as real excellence,—luxury and refinement have principally produced it; these have long been in a progressive state, and may now be said to have attained to their utmost height. But sterling humour is now seldom to be found, it has lost its brilliancy, its *naturalness*—if I may apply such a phrase to the creations of Shakspeare.

Trag. The current of genius is not, however, wholly dry: spectacles, pantomimes, and all these raree-shows of folly, are but the weeds that for a time impede its course: another age may remove these obstacles, and the stream again flow on, in its own deep melody, rippling and murmuring as of old. They who have so long sipped of the sluggish waters of the marsh, will then slake their thirst in the "well of English undefiled."

DIALOGUE XX.

Scene—The Elysian Fields.

Merchant *and* Soldier.

Merch. So, then, you are at length returned unhurt from the dreadful field of Mars: let me congratulate you on your escape; let me rejoice with you on leaving the earth, with all its tumults, battle, bloodshed, and ambition.

Sold. You hold entirely the language of the peace-maker, and seem to have forgotten that I had no other employment but war.

Merch. And a terrible employment it is: "Bella! horrida bella!" exclaims the poet; but it is not the peaceful man alone who shrinks from the horrors of war,—the sensation is common even to the soldier.

Sold. I always thought that glory was his great pursuit,—the prize for which he so earnestly contended.

Merch. You understand not the military character aright; the most distinguished commanders of ancient times (the moderns, by the way, are absolute children in the science of arms), the greatest captains, have actually "wept at sight of a battalia," when they have viewed an army drawn up and ready for the fight.

Sold. How, say you, the moderns absolute children in the science of arms? this is a point which many will be inclined to dispute with you, and stoutly. Have you, then, forgotten the conqueror of Europe, the Charlemagne of the nineteenth century,—he who is distinguished by the splendid titles of the great, the pious, the beneficent, and the just? the glorious conqueror, who—

Merch. Prostituted titles! "Ill-weaved ambition" is every way undeserving of them. The dictator, to whom you allude, may rank, indeed, in the class of "heroes," "men," as is observed by a celebrated writer, "who can never enjoy quiet themselves until they have taken it from all the world." Engaged in battle, it is glorious to become the conqueror; but still humanity cries out loudly against an ignis fatuus which leads to the destruction of our kind.

Sold. You are of opinion, then, that there is no true glory to be derived from the exercise of war.

Merch. Unquestionably none, when prompted to it by the love of power, the hope of conquest, or the desire of revenge. An excellent moralist has said,—"The peace of the world is interrupted at one time by the

caprice of a tyrant, at another by the rage of the conqueror: the memory is stored only with vicissitudes of evil, and the happiness, such as it is, of one part of mankind is found to arise commonly from sanguinary success; —from victories which confer upon them the power, not so much of improving life by any new enjoyment as of inflicting misery on others, and gratifying their own pride by comparative greatness." Thus speaks Samuel Johnson, and so will ever speak the friend of man.— The greatness, however, which here is hinted at may be made a question: remember the ethical poet:—

> Look next on greatness; say where greatness lies;
> "Where but among the heroes and the wise?"
> Heroes are much the same, the point 's agreed,
> From Macedonia's madman to the Swede.

Another poet also seems to have a just idea of real greatness:—

> Let high birth triumph; what can be more great?
> Nothing, *but merit in a low estate.*

But to return to our theme:—"There are but two kinds of just wars," says the president Montesquieu; "one which is waged to repel the attack of an enemy, and the other to succour an ally who is attacked."

Sold. It is, no doubt, highly proper that we should distinguish between the defensive war and the war of ambition; as also between that in which a nation may be interested, and the more frequent one occasioned by the disputes of princes,—which too often arise from some trivial grievance or point of honour; and which it would be more to the *honour* of either party, when the havoc made by war is considered, to pass without notice.

Merch. What painful reflections and miserable sensations must the page of history awaken in us, when we learn that, from the war of Troy to the beginning of the eighteenth century, there have fallen in battle five hundred and fifty-five millions, six hundred and fifty thousand men, to whom may be added women and

children, who have been destroyed in prodigious numbers by the sacking and burning of cities. How terrible is the retrospect! and when the motives, which so frequently urge to the destruction of our fellows are duly weighed and reflected on, the religionist, the philosopher, and the virtuous of every description, are astonished at the so easy perversion of our nature; and, were it not absolute impiety, we might, sometimes, be tempted to question the wisdom of the Deity, in bestowing the reasoning faculty on an animal, who, while he is styled human, shows himself, in many instances, inferior to the brute. A celebrated writer thus expresses himself on the incentives to war: "He asked me what were the usual causes or motives that made one country go to war with another; I answered, they were innumerable: sometimes the ambition of princes, who never think they have land or people enough to govern; sometimes the corruption of ministers, who engage their master in a war, in order to stifle or divert the clamour of the subjects against their evil administration; .... sometimes the quarrel between two princes is to decide which of them shall dispossess a third of his dominions, where neither of them pretend to any right; sometimes one prince quarrelleth with another for fear the other should quarrel with him; sometimes a war is entered upon because the enemy is too *strong*, and sometimes because he is too *weak*.—It is a very justifiable cause of war to invade a country after the people have been wasted by famine, destroyed by pestilence, or embroiled by factions among themselves: if a prince sends forces into a nation, where the people are poor and ignorant, he may lawfully put half of them to death, and make slaves of the rest, in order to civilize and reduce them from their barbarous way of living. It is a very kingly, honourable, and frequent practice, when one prince desires the assistance of another to secure him against an invasion, that the assistant, when he hath driven out the invader, should seize on the dominions himself, and

kill, imprison, or banish, the prince he came to relieve. Alliance by blood or marriage is a frequent cause of war between princes; and the nearer the kindred is, the greater is their disposition to quarrel.—Poor nations are hungry, and rich nations are proud, and pride and hunger will ever be at variance; for these reasons the trade of a soldier is held the most honourable of all others,—because a soldier is hired to kill in cold blood as many of his own species, who have never offended him, as he possibly can." Thus much with respect to the honourable part of the business; the same author shall next bring you acquainted with the pleasures which immediately result from it:—"Being no stranger to the art of war, I gave him a description of cannons, culverins, muskets, carbines, pistols, bullets, powder, swords, bayonets, battles, sieges, retreats, attacks, undermines, countermines, bombardments, sea-fights, ships sunk with a thousand men, twenty thousand killed on each side, dying groans, limbs flying in the air, smoke, noise, confusion, trampling to death under horses' feet; flight, pursuit, victory; fields strewed with carcases, left for food to dogs, and wolves, and birds of prey; plundering, stripping, burning, and destroying; and, to set forth the valour of my own dear countrymen, I assured him that I had seen them blow up a hundred enemies at once in a siege, and as many in a ship, and beheld the dead bodies drop down in pieces from the clouds, to the great diversion of the spectators!" Such are the exploits which certainly excite the admiration of many, but the approbation, I should hope, of few.

Sold. Is this then the bubble so attractive for the military man? Is this the reputation he is so eager to acquire?* And yet, a position has been laid down respecting the scourge in question, and on which I would willingly have your opinion; I would know if this postulate appears to be founded in *truth*:—War, except by

* "The soldier, seeking the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth."

the ambitious, the vain-glorious, has always been considered as an evil; but it has, at the same time, been declared to be a necessary evil,—since, without it, the world, it is asserted, would be overstocked with people; and, as the means of subsistence could not be found in proportion to their increase, the greater number must inevitably be destroyed by famine; or otherwise, that the stronger party would be driven to the dreadful alternative of preying, like cannibals, on their fellow-men. And is not this, then, it may be asked, a state of war?—of war, too, aggravated by every horror?

Merch. A poor and contemptible argument: such a consequence can only be held out to us by the wicked and the weak. It has been shown, by the political economist, that Europe (a proper attention being paid to the fisheries) has resources sufficient for the support of at least fifty times the number of inhabitants which it is, at present, known to contain; and, with regard to the culture of the earth, we must remember, that the greater the population of a country, the greater will be the produce, and in a largely increased ratio, by means of the labour which will necessarily be brought into it: the actual wants of our nature are few; and, were man to forego his luxuries but in part, there would be comfort and happiness for all.

Sold. But such relinquishment is not to be expected in the present state of the world: no one will voluntarily give up his enjoyments,—no man will cheerfully "shake his superflux" to wretches, who, from their poverty, he weakly supposes are deserted by their God. The general condition, indeed, might be meliorated by sumptuary laws.* The demon of avarice, however, still maintains his sway; but it is not by commerce alone that a people can be happy, or that a nation can be great. England has, by the French, been contemptuously styled "a country of shopkeepers;" and it is certain, that "trade's

* See an opinion in regard to the expediency of sumptuary laws, Dialogue VI.

unfeeling train"* have acquired too much consequence in our realm: the rapaciousness, likewise, not only of privileged companies, but of individuals, who have merged from, and been protected by them, calls loudly for a speedy and effective reform.

Merch. To have something more to bestow on suffering worth than merely a sigh,† were the highest gratification that the good and liberal mind could know; but this gratification can only be procured to us by cultivating the arts of peace: the generality, however, will tell me that the *honour* of a prince consists in the extending of his dominions, and the *glory* of a soldier in the destruction of his kind. These, however, are but relative terms,—and the principles thus attempted to be established have not their foundation in either nature or truth; they are merely the result of opinion and prejudice: combat them with the powers of reason, and they will vanish like mists before the sun.

Sold. Reason is, indeed, of giant strength; and were that strength confined to mundane affairs alone, not even passion would attempt to cope with her. She is, however, a true descendant of Typhœus, and believing her force to be resistless, has, ere now, waged war against the dominion of heaven: but holy faith has singly been sent out to oppose the assailant; and had she had, Briareus-like, a hundred hands, she would still be foiled in every attack: and yet this daughter of the skies, this holy faith, keeps entirely on the defensive; but she is clad in adamant, and every weapon thrown against it falls blunted, or broken to the earth.

Merch. I believe your sentiments are those of a good and virtuous man, and have already observed, that it is not a love of glory which has hurried you to the field of blood.—Glory! O, how mistaken is the term; how little is its true meaning understood; but this is a subject on

* ——— Trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain.—Golds. *Deserted Village.*

† ——— The sigh for suffering worth,
Lost in obscurity.—Thomson.

which the philosophic mind has, in all times, been fond to dwell: yet to rest the matter on my own individual opinion, might, in the present temper of the world, be thought not only ostentatious, but greatly presumptive. I shall, therefore, adduce, in support of it, a passage or two from the writings of the amiable and the enlightened Fenelon:—"Tous les peuples sont frères, et doivent s'aimer comme tels. O, rois! ne dites point qu'on doit désirer la guerre pour acquérir de la gloire. La vraie gloire ne se trouve point hors de l'humanité: quiconque préfère sa propre gloire aux sentimens de l'humanité est un monstre d'orgueil, et non pas un homme; il ne parviendra même qu'à une fausse gloire; car la vraie ne se trouve que dans la modération et dans la bonté. On pourra le flatter pour contenter sa folle vanité; mais on dira toujours de lui en secret, quand on voudra parler sincèrement,—'Il a d'autant moins mérité la gloire, qu'il l'a désiré avec une passion injuste: les hommes ne doivent point l'estimer, puisqu'il a si peu estimé les hommes, et qu'il a prodigué leur sang par une brutale vanité.'" Much more to the like effect is to be found in his "Télémaque," a book which, although censured by the fastidious and the cynical, as containing too lively a description of the love-passion, is yet to be considered as a model for the minor prince, since it is replete with maxims of government and rules of conduct, which, to adopt, must at once ensure his own personal happiness and the prosperity of his country. Observe, too, the language which Marmontel, who well knew "where greatness lies," has put into the mouth of Belisarius, when discoursing with the young Tiberius on the honour and happiness of a king: the dialogue running as follows:—

"*Tiberius.* You will grant me, that there are refined and sensible delights, in their nature proper for the gratification of a monarch, and which are always sure to give rational enjoyments, without the danger of disgusting by repetition.

"*Belisarius.* As for instance?

" *Tib.* The love of glory, for instance.

" *Bel.* But what sort of glory ?

" *Tib.* Why, of all the various kinds of glory, renown in arms must hold the foremost place.

" *Bel.* Such is your position: and do you think the pleasure that springs from conquest has a sincere and lasting charm in it ? Alas ! when thousands are stretched in mangled heaps on the field of battle, can the mind in that situation taste of joy ? I can make allowance for those who have met danger in all its shapes; they may be permitted to rejoice that they have escaped with their lives; but, in the case of a king, born with sensibility of heart, the day that sheds a deluge of blood, and bids the tears of natural affection flow in rivers round the land, that cannot be a day of true enjoyment. I have more than once traversed over a field of battle;—I would have been glad to have seen a Nero in my place,—the tears of humanity must have burst from him."

Merch. But now attend to the advice which is given by Fingal to a youthful chief: " Never seek the battle, nor shun it when it comes." This is true heroism and true honour; for this is never to become the aggressor,—it is merely to stand on the defensive.

Sold. You are, in truth, a strenuous advocate in the cause of humanity, and, no doubt, hold in reverence the names of Sully and Rousseau, whose projects for perpetual peace, though built on different principles, do equal honour to the head and heart of both. They had, doubtless, in view, not only their own glory, but that of their respective monarchs,—and it were, perhaps, difficult to determine to whom the greater praise may belong,—whether to the man who lays down a plan for the good of his fellows, or to those who, having at once the ability and the power, are willing to give to that plan a proper and lasting effect.

Merch. Henry, in whose name the project (" Le grand dessein d'Henri,") had been announced, was very desirous of seeing it become a reality: the sovereigns of Europe

were invited to take into consideration the good, both immediate and remote, that must infallibly result from such a measure. Neither was the scheme, in the smallest degree, visionary; humanity alone might have prompted to the adoption of it; independent of the advantages to be derived from it, to the arts, to commerce, &c., and without adverting to the addition which must, consequently, be made to the pleasures and conveniences of life,—they are, surely, no very trifling objects; it was yet deserving of attention, on the principle of what may be called fellow-feeling.

Sold. I allow that your argument has force: on the principle of humanity, it is, perhaps, unanswerable; and yet the warrior by profession would, in considering the grounds on which you have proceeded, be induced to employ the "reproof valiant," partly in justification of himself; and this he would do by instancing the nefariousness of the slave-trade, in which so many of your brethren were wont to engage. Further: the soldier will tell you that he takes up arms in the service of his king and country; and that his conduct, in fine, is warranted; or whence the law of nations in regard to war? He will recriminate by dwelling on the inhumanity of the African ship-master, who not unfrequently becomes the destroyer of him, whom, from the motive of avarice, he would wish to save.—And for what, it will be asked, is the captive saved? Why, to bear about "a living death." Such are the soldier and the slave-dealer; both, perhaps, will be called torturers; but it is the aim of the latter to inflict a torture through life,—therefore, he must be considered the most cruel of the two.

Merch. I admit your conclusion to be just; but the subject is much too painful for discussion.—Here, then, break we off; and I have only to hope that, at our next meeting, instead of discoursing of war and slavery, we shall be able to congratulate each other on the establishment of universal love and peace; the news of which will soon reach even these realms, should it take place.

A TRIP TO HOLLAND.

PART I.

INTRODUCTION.

"OBSERVATIONS made in a Trip to Holland"—Ha! ha! ha! And why that laugh, good Sir? You perhaps imagine, that a Belgic sky has something baneful in its influence; or that the man who has resided for any little time in Holland must necessarily become as dull and phlegmatic as many of its inhabitants? "I do." You imagine, likewise, that a Dutchman is totally devoid of sentiment; and that a Dutchwoman is an utter stranger to those finer affections of the soul, which so eminently characterize our own lovely countrywomen? "Undoubtedly." Why, then, Sir, you are undoubtedly mistaken.

A TRIP TO HOLLAND.

PACKET AT SEA.

A VERY heavy gale. The voice, however, of a Frenchman singing a *petit chanson*, struck upon my ear. Strange! exclaimed I, that a man should be thus easy, nay, even merry, during a storm at sea! My curiosity was raised: I inquired for the singer, and was conducted to him by the mate.

He was lying on a couch, evidently disordered by the motion of the vessel. Stranger still, thought I, that the animal spirits should thus triumph over the bodily affections; and I rallied him accordingly.

"Ah! Monsieur," cried he, "on m'a dit que le vaisseau est en danger, c'est pourquoi je chante pour chasser la peur."

"Pour chasser la peur?"

"Oui, Monsieur, car je n'ai jamais l'air triste—en un mot, je ne suis pas Anglais."

"You think an Englishman, then, the dullest of human beings?" "*Sans doute*," returned he, loud enough to be heard by his friend, a Dutchman, who was not a little pleased with the reply.

I complimented him on his voice, and on his excellent style in singing. "Is it possible that you can be serious?" said he. "I am an Englishman," replied I. He smiled, and said no more; but he was evidently pleased. I

had gained his favour by commending his voice. O flattery!—soft delusive flattery! how easily dost thou wind thyself about the heart of man!—how pleasing, how soothing art thou to the soul! I was ever afterwards his friend—his *bon ami*. Charmed with being thought a singer!—Be it so. And if friendships may be thus easily purchased, tell me, I pray ye, O sons and daughters of humanity! would you ever live without a friend?

HELVOETSLUYS.

I WAS glad to quit the vessel. Something like uneasiness, however, hung about my heart. "Is it possible," said I to myself, "that I can have so much of the *amor patriæ* about me, as to be affected by a change of soil? Am I not still in a land of liberty? and am I not preparing to join my friends, who are now at the Hague?" The latter consideration was pleasing to me; but it was only the pleasure of a moment. I felt myself unhappy, but was totally mistaken in the cause.

I was at length awakened from the dream. "I have left in England every thing that is dear to me; my family and particular friends."—"If we should never meet again!——" The thought was painful to me. "I will divert it," said I, "by wandering about the town." In this state of mind I found myself standing at the head of the pier. I cast my eyes upon the water—"The sea divides us."—"If we should never meet again!" "Foolish thoughts!" exclaimed I, and instantly returned to the inn.

Nothing can be more ridiculous than for a man to think of concealing his unhappiness by a show of jocularity and ease. Now, though I had reflected on this a hundred times before, and had as frequently observed

its effect, I was still weak enough to fall into the error which I so universally condemned. I imagined that my companions had discovered my grief—I was apprehensive that they knew the cause; and, to confess the truth, I dreaded the Frenchman's raillery. I was, accordingly, the merriest of the set. And was I fearful of incurring his censure? Certainly not. How happens it, then, O casuists! that we are thus ashamed of feelings which would do the greatest honour to our nature, yet frequently boast of actions at which the barbarian has been known to shudder? I fear you are but ill prepared to answer me.

But it is time to continue my journey. The Frenchman and I were left together at the inn. He was going immediately to the Hague—so was I. "If agreeable, Monsieur," said he, "I should be happy in accompanying you: I am somewhat *enjoué*, and it may possibly remove your uneasiness."

Now, though I would have given fifty ducats to have escaped his observation on the matter; and though I was somewhat vexed at his having mentioned it—I thanked him for his civility, and, I believe, with an appearance of gratitude. He had at once mortified and pleased me. The fault, however, was in myself.—He was evidently a man of discernment——

—I am resolved, thought I (putting my hat upon my head with some degree of violence), that, with similar feelings, I will never again appear the happiest of men.

THE COMMISSARY.

HELVOET.

THERE is little to be seen in Helvoetsluys. We therefore resolved on setting out immediately for Briel. A carriage was necessary, and it must necessarily be furnished

by the commissary. Be it known, therefore, (and I would advise my countrymen to keep it in remembrance) that a Dutch commissary is a man of infinite importance; at least in his own opinion, of which we had an indubitable proof.

A waeghen (in English, a waggon) was ordered to be got ready. Now, why the vehicle in question should be called a waggon, I cannot possibly conceive. It is by no means inelegant, and might undoubtedly be styled a coach—but whether this is to be attributed to the genius of the language, or—but no matter—it were loss of time to think of setting a Dutchman right; once wrong, he will ever remain so.

The waggon, however, was ordered, and we were told by the commissary that we must wait. There was something unpleasing in the sound. It is true, indeed, that there are times and seasons when a man can wait with a tolerable degree of patience—this did not happen to be one of them.—Half an hour had elapsed; and in that time the commissary, who never wishes to remain idle, had taken the money for the carriage, and a sesterhaf* for himself. The sum he had retained was trifling; but his seizing on it was insufferable. He would have gained more by leaving the matter to me, and I was careful to let him know it.

The Frenchman had hitherto sat contentedly; he now, however, began to abuse the commissary. The Dutchman coolly answered he must "wait." He then rapped out several *diables*—swearing that a Dutch commissary was the most phlegmatic sot existing, and that it was impossible he should be moved——

"He would make an excellent inquisitor," whispered I—my companion acknowledged it with a nod.

We are apt to form our opinions too hastily: for, though the commissary was by no means the most obliging person in the world, he was not altogether blameable in the present business. There was a particular reason in the delay.

* Five-pence halfpenny.

LA BOURGEOISE.

HELVOET.

In little more than an hour and the carriage was brought to the door. We were at the same time accosted by a lively Frenchwoman, who requested to be indulged with a seat in it. She was dressed *très proprement;* and it is very clear to me, that we had been detained for no other reason than to give her an opportunity of reaching Briel.

Strange liberties! thought I, that when a man has engaged a vehicle to carry him forward on his journey, he shall, notwithstanding, be detained above an hour, in order to accommodate a *petite Bourgeoise* (for she was absolutely nothing more), who may happen to be going the same route.

"This would never be endured in England," said I. "C'est très commun ici," replied my companion; "and it would be altogether *vilain* to send her away—we must undoubtedly comply."

The gallantry of a Frenchman was at stake. At any other time, perhaps, I might have been equally polite; at this particular moment, however, I was a little out of humour; and very earnestly contended that the carriage would hold but two.

I was already in the vehicle, and my companion by my side—"*Voyez-vous, ma chère,*" said I, (pointing to the seat,) "there is scarcely an inch of room." Now, whether the *ma chère* which had thus inadvertently fallen from me, or whether——but I will not puzzle myself about it—suffice it, that I had no sooner uttered the words than she cried—"O mon Dieu! il y a assez de place—Je me mettrai là, Monsieur, entre vous deux." Saying which she stepped into the carriage, placed herself between us, and ordered the postillion to go on.

Fort bien! exclaimed I—and if any of my country-women could have acted thus—the virtuous part of them, I mean—and such was the lady in question—I will forfeit every ducat in my purse.

We had proceeded a mile or two in silence, when my attention was awakened by our female. She was discoursing on the badness of the roads and the unfavourableness of the weather—remarked, that she was particularly desirous of getting that evening to Briel; and that she must have attempted the journey on foot, had she not so fortunately met with me.

And why, in the name of Heaven, thought I, did you not tell me this before? By all that's amiable, (looking on her face, which I now discovered to be particularly handsome,) I would most willingly subject myself to every inconvenience, rather than fail in accommodating so fair a creature.

She certainly read my thoughts. "Apparemment, Monsieur," said she, "je vous incommode?" "Not in the least, Madam," cried I, squeezing myself as much as possible into the corner of the carriage; and which, by the way, was the very thing I should have done at first—"not in the least."

She smiled at this—assured me that she was parfaitement à son aise; and ironically added, that Monsieur was "très obligeant" in so readily giving her a place in his coach.

At this instant a blush of—but I will leave the reader to imagine the kind—arose upon my cheek. The lady immediately fixed her eyes upon me—the shame of being noticed by her increased it—she gazed still more ardently—my face was presently like a furnace. I knew not how to act. I knew not which way to look.—She now, however, was evidently concerned for my distress, and kindly relieved me, by turning aside her head.

Praise undeserv'd is satire in disguise.

So says the poet, and I never felt the justness of the observation more forcibly in my life.

We no sooner arrived at Briel than the lady alighted from the carriage, making me the most graceful curtsey in the world. It seemed, however, to reproach me, and I wished she had let it alone.

She was here met by a young man, whom I found to be her lover, and who received her with every appearance of joy. And now, thought I, had I by my churlishness prevented this meeting, what, "O Cupid! prince of gods and men,"* should I not have had to answer for?

THE RESOLUTION.

BRIEL.

I WAS really sorry at parting with the *petite Bourgeoise*. Not that I was any way enamoured of her, but because I wished to apologize for my behaviour. I had certainly treated her unhandsomely.

Well, well, said I to myself, it is but a trifling matter, and I will think no more about it—I am resolved I will not.

Now, this resolution was the most unfortunate one in nature—it was the very thing I ought not to have done. From the moment I had taken it, she was ever uppermost in my thoughts.

—Psha! cried I—and I again determined to forget her—

"Is there any thing to be seen in Briel?" said I, turning to the landlord, who stood behind me with his bill of fare. "Oui, oui, beaucoup," returned he, "c'est un charmant endroit." I knew it to be exactly the reverse: but I very readily pardoned him. It is natural for every man to extol the town in which he resides: it

* Euripides.

is particularly so in an innkeeper. The truth, however, is, that Briel is one of the dullest places on earth.

I was sitting pensively at the hotel—the *petite Bourgeoise* entirely forgotten, and my thoughts devoted to my friends in England—when the landlord hastily entered the room.

"You cannot be ignorant, Monsieur," said he, "that at this time almost every Dutchman is a soldier. The burghers of the town are about to assemble for their evening exercise. It is a very pleasing sight; and if agreeable, I will have the honour of conducting you to the parade."

I answered, I should be glad of the walk.

"You can never think of walking, Monsieur," said he; "as the distance is upwards of two miles. It is *tout à fait* impossible."

"And where is the impossibility," said I, "of walking two or three miles?"

"Il fait très chaud, Monsieur."

"A very excellent reason," returned I. And as the heat had hitherto been unperceived by me, I was certainly obliged to him for the information; and I think I made him a bow.

"Beside," continued he, "there is a lady in the room below, who hopes to be favoured with a place in the carriage"——

Why, what the plague! thought I, this fellow has assuredly heard of my adventure, and takes the opportunity of bantering me. I will inquire into it——

I was instantly at the bottom of the stairs—the *petite Bourgeoise* was standing at the door—she made me a curtsey down to the ground, and in a moment was out of sight——

"Plague on it!" cried I—"but I deserve it all—this is undoubtedly a woman of spirit!"

I afterwards visited the burghers; they are very "patriotic" soldiers, so I will say no more about them. Beside, the English reader is sufficiently acquainted with the nature of military associations.

THE FAREWELL!

MAESLANDSLUYS.

We next reached Maeslandsluys; at which place a number of women and children were assembled, in order to take their last farewell of a vessel that was preparing to quit the port. The ship was actually under weigh. "Adieu, husband! adieu, father!"—The sailors gently waved their hands.—"Adieu, father! adieu, husband! and may Heaven be propitious to you!" was the universal cry. This ejaculation was continued with the utmost fervency till the vessel was nearly out of sight—when entirely so, they stood for some minutes motionless; their eyes at the same time seemingly starting from the sockets, as if desirous of once more getting a view of it; but in vain!—They then burst into a flood of tears, and modestly retired.

Tender souls! cried I—I do not wonder at your sorrows. The very existence, perhaps, of yourselves and families depends on the safety and prosperity of these your mates. How then should you remain unmoved? —Peace be with you!——

It was now dinner-time: I therefore repaired to the inn; and seeing the master of it at the door, I desired that something might instantly be got ready. "Dites cela à ma femme," said he, (observe, he was a Dutchman) and turning upon his heel, he left me to find her as I could.

And why, thought I, could you not have spoken about it yourself? You are the keeper of a tavern, and consequently should be civil. *Quel bête!*—and I went immediately in search of his wife.

THE TRECKSCHUTE.

DELFT.

"HEAVEN forefend," said I, on stepping out of the treckschute* at Delft—"Heaven forefend that I should be under the necessity of travelling for any length of time, in the manner I have done to-day. It may be perfectly consonant to a Dutchman's feelings, but it is by no means so to mine. What! to get forward at the rate of barely three miles an hour, cooped up in a vessel which can only be compared with Noah's ark, and at a time, too, when the hey-day of the blood requires one to be for ever on the wing? intolerable!

"Pray, Mynheer," said I, expressing my dissatisfaction to one of our fellow-travellers, as we were walking together on the quay—"pray, Mynheer, what is your opinion on the matter?"

"I think the treckschute a very excellent vehicle," replied he: "it is certainly a convenient one, since a man may either smoke or sleep in it."

Smoke or sleep! Good Heaven! And my life on it, thought I, you have not a single wish beyond them. So bidding him adieu, I hastily pursued my way.

Our next stage was to the Hague—another treckschute?—"Psha!" cried I—"Peste!" exclaimed the Frenchman. He bore it still less patiently than I did.

One may pass an hour or two in reading, however, thought I: so taking Sterne from my pocket (with whose exquisite touches of nature and true passion I am at all times delighted) I presently forgot my situation.

I continued reading till we were within a league of the Hague. I then began to consider, that a preface

* A covered boat, not unlike the pleasure barges belonging to the city of London.

would be wanting to that account of my travels which I was preparing to lay before the public. And why, said I to myself, should I not write it in the Treckschute? And I set about it accordingly.

PREFACE:

IN THE TRECKSCHUTE.

EVERY man, on setting out on his travels, should divest himself as much as possible of national prejudices. If he departs with that extreme partiality and love of country which is so peculiar to the untravelled Englishman, scarcely a single object, in his eyes, ever wears its natural appearance—all is uniformly wrong. His narrative, if he publishes any, is evidently tinctured by it; and if any one endeavours to set him right, he considers it as arraigning his want of taste.

Now, this is a matter to which the literary traveller, above all others, should be particularly attentive. He who means to give his observations to the world should be careful not to mislead. To guard against this, let him not allow himself to be deceived: let him view the people whose character he means to delineate, with an inquiring but philosophic eye; and if he discovers any thing in their manners which may particularly excite his disgust, let him not examine into the state of their atmosphere, but into their polity and mode of rule.

I have been led into this reflection, by observing that the Hollander is usually represented as rude and boisterous in his manners, because he lives in 52 degrees north; and the Italian soft and effeminate, because he happens to be a few degrees to the southward of him.

Speculative men are very apt to cherish this mistake. Nothing, however, can be more erreonous than the

generally received opinion, that the manners of a nation are to be attributed altogether to climate. Do we not find in the Polar regions the same degree of barbarism that marks the inhabitants of the torrid zone? And is not their form and order of government, in many instances, equally arbitrary and unjust? Why, then, should we talk of climate?—It is absurd. The customs and habits of individuals will evermore depend either on education or the laws of their country—on moral, not on physical causes.

To resume my subject——

But while I would particularly caution the traveller against the appearance of an extravagant fondness for his own country, there may be some little danger of his running into the opposite extreme. The fine gentleman, for example, is eternally unhappy, lest he should be considered by his acquaintance as a mere John Bull—a terrible stigma! We, therefore, find him, in all companies and on all occasions, desirous of having it recorded, "that he has skimmed the cream of France, Italy, Germany, and the North;" in fine, "that he has seen enough of other countries, to induce him heartily to despise his own."

This latter character, however, is much the most faulty of the two; for what can be so insufferable as the coxcomb of nature confirmed by the tour of Europe?

With respect to the traveller of taste—the man whose time is wholly taken up in describing edifices, statues, and gardens—I can scarcely hazard a syllable in his favour. A very elegant writer, speaking of the uses of foreign travel, says, "I remember to have read, that Socrates had never stirred out of Athens; and that when his admirers would sometimes ask him, why he affected this singularity, he was used to say, 'that stones and trees did not edify him.' Intimating, I suppose, that the sight of fine towns and fine countries, which the voyagers of those days, as of ours, made a matter of much

vanity, was the principal fruit they had reaped to themselves from their fashionable labours."

It must be acknowledged, however, that "a dull detail of statues and pictures" is not without its uses.

Having said so little of the traveller of taste, I shall content myself with barely mentioning the virtuoso—the mere virtuoso: he, I mean, who quits his country for no other purpose than to form a cabinet of medals, stones, and butterflies. The truth is, I should have passed him over entirely, had it not been that almost every traveller will be found to rank in one or other of the following classes:—

The literary traveller; or he who inquires into the state of men and things.

The gentleman traveller; or he who has nothing in view.

The traveller of taste; or he who gives a catalogue of churches and pictures.

The virtuoso; or he who travels in search of rarities.

And thus the circle is complete. "Well, Schipper, when shall we get to the Hague?" "In less than five minutes." Then here I finish my Preface.

THE APOLOGY.

HAGUE.

No man cares to have his wit, his judgment, or even his good-nature called in question. Speak of him as a drunkard, or the betrayer of innocence, and he will possibly become your friend: touch upon the weakness of his intellects, and he will most assuredly become your enemy. In a word, you may with safety represent him as the most flagitious character on earth, when you dare not even hint at his want of talents, or, as I before observed, even at his want of good-nature.

Now, as the charge of ill-nature may, perhaps, be brought against myself, on account of the acrimony with which I have sometimes spoken of the Dutch; and lest the reader should sit down with the idea that I am subject to similar failings, I must here beg leave to set him right in that particular.

I quitted England with an unfavourable opinion of the Hollander. He had been represented to me as crafty and subtle in the extreme; a stranger to friendship, and totally wanting in that refinement of manners and rectitude of heart which are so essential to the order and well-being of society.

To condemn a people in general terms is certainly unjust; for, though there are very many in Holland who undoubtedly come under the above description, there is a still larger number who do the greatest honour to their country; and I had no sooner reached the Hague than I became perfectly sensible of it.

"My mind," said I to myself, "is somewhat jaundiced, but it will wear off as I get along."

THE AUTHOR.

HOTEL AT THE HAGUE.

"YES, yes," repeated I, drawing close to my table, and resting my head upon my hand. "Yes, yes, it will wear off as I get along. Away with all paltry prejudices! —But they have already left me. I feel my heart expand. From this moment I will consider myself as a citizen of the world, and the deserving man shall be as my brother."

This was precisely the time for a stranger to present himself before me—and effectually, on turning my head towards the door, I perceived a Dutchman, of tolerably

genteel appearance, who was on the point of entering the room.

He stopped a moment or two at the *entrée*, as though he thought his intrusion might offend. I requested him to come forward. He approached in silence—took a paper from his pocket, and presenting it to me with all imaginable politeness, but without a shadow of servility, retired a few paces towards the door while I read it.

His manner was infinitely pleasing to me. I opened the paper, and found it to be a list of subscribers to a literary work—the subscription two ducats. "No great sum," said I; "but thou shouldst have it (observing the name of the writer in the proposals, and which I knew to be a distinguished one)—thou shouldst have it, were it twenty times as much."

He was unable to speak in reply; but he made me a particularly grateful bow, and looked "unutterable things."—It touched me to the very soul.

—"And pray," continued I, remarking that his subscribers were not above eleven or twelve in number,—"pray," said I, "how long have you been in collecting these names?" "Upwards of twelve months," said he, "and I almost despair of getting another." Gracious Heaven! thought I, to what a situation is genius reduced! A man of first-rate abilities is now standing before me—evidently in the greatest distress—neglected by his countrymen—and seeking a temporary and trifling relief in the benevolence of an utter stranger!—But thus have I found it in every country of Europe.—Alas! alas! I blush at the want of humanity in my species.

He had hitherto stood in the middle of the room; and my spirits had been so greatly agitated, that I forgot to desire him to take a chair. I now did it, however, and with the best grace I was master of, apologized for my want of thought.

He drew hesitatingly towards me. This man, said I to myself (observing his diffidence and fears), will never advance his fortunes—he is infinitely too modest. Hu-

mility, which a century or two ago would have paved his way to honours and preferments, is now an effectual barrier to them. Effrontery, self-sufficient effrontery, carries all before her, while—

Patient merit, with a down-cast eye,

looks on, in wonder, and starves.

I desired to know the success of his former pieces. "Alas!" replied he, "I have experienced all the mortifications and vicissitudes in life, so common to an author. Some of my publications were very favourably received —I gave them unprotected to the world: others, indeed, required a particular patronage; and I was therefore under the necessity, although to me painful, of soliciting it."

And painful it must indeed have been, thought I, to a man of thy feelings.

"It may be sufficient to observe to you," continued he, "that my applications were without effect; and that my writings—but I cannot better explain my meaning than in an expression of Juvenal—*laudatur et alget*. Such, in short, was their fate."

Saying this (a tear or two at the same time standing in his eye) he modestly withdrew. A sigh involuntarily broke from me on his going away.—"And yet," cried I, "if I know any thing of the human heart, the day is not far distant when this man will avenge himself on his oppressors. True genius may be depressed but for a time, shaken by every storm, and subject to every insult, still the germ remains within, and will shoot out above a thousand obstacles: it knows its own rights, and will assert them."

The men who had treated him thus unworthily, were actually enemies to themselves; and I would recommend to the attention of all such, the following lines from La Bruyère:—"J'éviterai avec soin d'offenser personne, si je suis équitable; mais sur toutes choses un homme d'esprit, si j'aime le moins du monde mes intérêts."

THE MAÎTRE D'HÔTEL.

THE HAGUE.

THE literary supplicant had scarcely quitted my chamber, when the maître d'hôtel came in with a list of what *I ought to want.*

"And why," cried I, somewhat peevishly, "did you not bring me this before? It would have put me in mind of inviting the worthy creature to supper with me. But you know where he lives, I suppose—I can easily send to him." "Qui, Monsieur?" "Why, the gentleman who just now left me, Monsieur De C——." "Je ne sais pas," replied the maître d'hôtel; "I really cannot tell." "I wonder at that," said I; "he is a man of letters, et encore il est de grande réputation." "Cela est bien possible," said he, with all imaginable *sang froid* —"I know little about these people: many of them, indeed, are desirous of scraping acquaintance with *me*— the reason is pretty obvious. But they are a very troublesome set; I have entirely washed my hands of them."

I told him in a whisper, that the Frenchman, my companion, was an author.—"Not," continued he, "but that I have had the honour of entertaining as worthy gentlemen of that description as ever lived. There is M. Le Comte De—— Ah! voilà un homme extraordinaire: et ma foi il a autant d'argent que d'esprit."—"Cela est bien possible," replied I, in exactly the same key in which he had given it immediately before.—So I heard no more of the Count.

"It is very unlucky," said I, "that I suffered Monsieur De C—— to go away—But as I shall stay a month or more at the Hague—"

"Vous resterez ici encore un mois, Monsieur? Voyons—peut-être je me rappellerais—Ah! je m'en souviens bien à présent où demeure ce Monsieur De C——." "And where is it?" "Toute proche de la

porte de Scheveling." "Then do me the favour to send to him," said I, "and request that he will honour me with his company to supper." He was gone in an instant.

A precious fellow, this maître d'hôtel, thought I.—But his house is a good one, and I must therefore patiently endure the rest.

THE COMPLIMENT.

HOTEL AT THE HAGUE.

In a short time the maître d'hôtel returned, telling me, that M. De C—— was not at home. He was "diablement fâché." I saw he was. To keep up my spirits, however, he had brought a bottle of Burgundy in his hand, which he said he could venture to recommend, being, as he swore, exactly the same sort that the Prince of Orange always had at his table. There was no disputing the truth of this with him, however greatly I might be inclined to doubt it; and as the Burgundy was really good, I cared but little about the matter. So I drank the wine for such as the maître d'hôtel had given it; at the same time observing to him, that there was no occasion to confirm it with an oath. He made me a very low bow.

In about a quarter of an hour Monsieur De C—— came in. The maître d'hôtel was particularly attentive to him. He knew I should be pleased with it; and I was to stay a month or two at the Hague. This fellow, said I to myself, will one day have his *château*. What a contrast is here!

We now sat down to supper, and I found in the conversation of M. De C—— every thing that I had figured to myself. He was lively and intelligent; and,

for a Dutchman, extremely communicative. We talked of indifferent things—plays, politics, and the state of literature on the Continent.

"Books," said he, "are very rapidly multiplied both at Paris and at the Hague; and it is on that account, although it may appear a parodox with many, that an author finds it so very difficult to live." I answered, "that I could very easily conceive it."

With respect to the politics of his country, I found him somewhat wary and reserved. I spoke of the sea-fight off the Dogger Bank, and of the bravery of Admiral Byland. He replied, "that it was *peu de chose*." I told him, "my countrymen were of a different opinion."

He asked me how I found the Dutch. I answered, "that I had seen but little of them; but that if in my tour through Holland I met with twenty like himself, I should return to England in much better humour than I had left it." He gently inclined his head. It was sufficient. And yet, for such a compliment, a Frenchman would have made me as many bows as there were words in it.

My companion gave a shrug.

"But how do you like our women?" continued he. "'Faith," said I, "I think them particularly handsome —as handsome as those of England"—

—The door of our room was at this time open, and we perceived a Dutchwoman in the adjoining chamber, who, on hearing our discourse, immediately adjusted her head-dress at the glass.

"Ah," exclaimed the Frenchman, "voilà une petite Mademoiselle qui entend bien ce que c'est qu'un éloge." "True," replied Monsieur De C——; "and she seems determined to apply it to herself."

We now retired to rest. In passing to my chamber, I met the lady I have lately spoken of, and who proved to be the mistress of the house. She made me a much lower curtsey than a hostess usually makes to an ordinary guest.

THE PARADE.

HAGUE.

EARLY the next morning I was again visited by Monsieur De C——, who came to offer his services in conducting me about the Hague. I thanked him, I said, for his attention; but that I was unwilling to divert him from his studies. He pressed the matter, however, so very earnestly, that I was under the necessity of accepting him for my guide; and shortly after we set out on our perambulation.

In how opposite a manner are our friendships and connexions frequently formed! We at one time enter into them with the greatest caution and reserve; by the slowest and most regular gradation: and at another time, perhaps, with the utmost precipitancy and haste. Monsieur De C—— and I were already friends.

We proceeded immediately to the parade. Both horse and foot were at this time drawn out, and made a truly soldier-like appearance. I never saw a finer set of men. Frederick himself, I think, would be delighted with them. I wished for nothing more ardently than the possibility of instantly passing to the troops of the Emperor. Monsieur De C—— would have been equally pleased to have done the same. "If," said he, "they are superior to those of the States (superior in numbers they certainly are), there is little to be expected from the clemency of Joseph. But we have hitherto boldly maintained our rights; and if our soldiers are to be depended on, I should hope that their High Mightinesses would continue firm in their resolutions, and never give up a single point. The demands of the Emperor are unjust."

Monsieur De C—— had scarcely done speaking, when my attention was called to the other side of the parade, by the appearance of the Prince of Orange. A murmur

of some few moments ran among the people. I demanded the reason of their discontent. "They trembled," they said, "for their freedom—that it was evidently the aim of the Prince of Orange to subvert their established form of government, and to assume to himself a kingly and even a despotic power." "And what steps," said I, "has he taken towards it?" "Not any," returned they; "but we fear that such are his intentions." "Ridiculous!" cried I, endeavouring to point out to them the improbability of such an event; but they were not to be reasoned with.

I now moved towards his Highness. Calmness and benignity sat upon his countenance; and there was an ease and affability in his carriage and general address, which won upon me strangely. "This prince," said I to Monsieur De C——, "is an amiable character; every unprejudiced person, indeed, has always represented him as such: I saw it, however, on the instant, and would venture to risk my opinion and skill in physiognomy even on the judgment of Monsieur De Lavater. By Heaven!" exclaimed I, "O Hollanders! there is a cruelty and injustice in your conduct towards this man, for which it is scarcely possible to make atonement. At present, however, he is your friend—at present, did I say? No! treat him as you will, he never can become your enemy. O! that I could inspire you with sentiments noble and generous as his own!"

Monsieur De C—— embraced me.

Leaving the parade, we sauntered about the town without meeting with any thing remarkable, and returned to the hotel to dinner. After which, by way of proving to M. De C—— that I was an advocate for liberty, without being a friend to licentiousness, I drank the Prince of Orange's health in a bumper.

THE THEATRE.

HAGUE.

I HAD not yet visited the *Comédie Française*. The play announced for the present evening was the *Méchant* of Gresset—an admirable piece: I was therefore desirous of attending the representation; more especially as the Princess of Orange was to be present. So at the usual hour I repaired to the theatre, and took my seat in the parquet.

"And this," said I, (on hearing that her Highness was entering the theatre,) "will enable me to speak decisively of the Dutch. Much will depend on the manner in which they may receive the consort of their prince."

She entered the house unnoticed. The Princess Louisa accompanied her. The curtain was already drawn up. How! thought I, not the smallest attention —not the most trifling mark of respect! But what was my surprise, when a few minutes afterwards an utter stranger was admitted to their box: it was the Abbé R——, a literary gentleman, with whom I had become acquainted at the Table d'Hôte. Rallying him next day on his situation at the play-house, I found him equally astonished at it with myself; and he very pleasantly observed to me, in the language of one of our own poets, that he could not help wondering, while sitting by the side of the princess, "how the devil he got there."

Though the Princess of Orange is not a regular beauty, there is something particularly striking in her countenance—mild, yet penetrating; and, if the soul may be said to "sit within the eye"*—her's I pronounce a noble one.

* Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eye.—MILTON.

THE PROVERB AND THE BON-MOT.

HAGUE.

I was in want of gloves; so I stepped into a shop in the Casuari-street, in order to purchase a pair. A grisette of genteel appearance was sitting behind the counter—I thought I knew the face. It was actually the *petite Bourgeoise* whom I had *accommodated* with a place in my carriage.

"Ah! Monsieur," cried she, "que je suis enchantée de vous voir!" Every circumstance of my behaviour to her at Briel immediately rushed into my mind. I was really afraid to meet her eye—it was in truth a piercing one.

"Y-a-t-il long temps que vous êtes à la Haye?" continued she. I answered with some degree of hesitation, that I had been there about a week.—I was really confounded—I wished myself away: so having paid for the gloves, I complained that I was greatly fatigued by my walk, and that I must return to the hotel to tea. Indeed I should not, she said—she would have the honour of making me a cup herself.—It was true, her husband was not at home——

"You are married then?" said I.

"O qu'oui," said she, "depuis trois jours—mais cela ne signifie rien: mon mari n'est pas de ces jaloux qui—mais entrez—entrez, Monsieur." Saying which, she took me by the arm, and conducted me into her parlour.

I apologized for the trouble I was about to give her.—She was pleased to call it a pleasure.—"Besides," said she, "you are very distant from your hotel, et encore, Monsieur, à beau jeu beau retour." I thought it a little maliciously said; but excused it on account of her liveliness.

She entertained me with a hundred little anecdotes.

In half a day I might have known the history of half the Hague.—I never passed an hour more agreeably.

I would willingly have thanked her for her civilities; but I found there was no such thing as doing it—a Frenchwoman thinks nothing of them. So having drank the tea, which I thought particularly good, I complaisantly bade her adieu.

It was now eight o'clock. How should I pass the remainder of the evening? The theatres were shut. A bill was posted against a house—"The Learned Horse will exhibit here." I will see him, said I; and took my seat accordingly.

His *knowledge* was really great; and I was half inclined to subscribe to the opinion of a witty Frenchman, who, on seeing him, had been heard to exclaim—"Qu'apparemment il avait mangé du foin défendu."

THE MAN IN POWER.

HAGUE.

Monsieur De M——, the French gentleman whom I met with at Helvoetsluys, and who had hitherto accompanied me in my tour, had set apart a morning for waiting on one of the most considerable men at the Hague; and as it was a public day, he civilly offered to take me along with him.

A Dutch levee was entirely new to me; I therefore accepted the offer with pleasure—and at an early hour we arrived at the hotel of Monsieur De ——.

This gentleman had formerly, and previous to his coming into office, professed a friendship for Monsieur De M——; and as Monsieur De M—— had lately given to the world a work, which had justly entitled him to rank among the *beaux esprits* of the age, he

had, author-like, imagined that his reception at the minister's would be of the most flattering and agreeable kind.

But the man in power is every where the same. Though wholly disengaged, it was impossible to gain the ear of Monsieur De ——; and all that Monsieur De M—— could obtain from him was merely a recognising nod.

My companion, however, was not a man to "bow and sue for grace with suppliant knee;" he therefore instantly quitted the chamber, with a resolution of never entering it again. A sigh, indeed, escaped him. He was poor—his merit was the bar to his advancement. The minister was jealous of his rising fame.*—Good Heaven!

THE SUPPLICATION.

HAGUE.

How sweet, how exquisite must be the sensations of that man, who, having a fortune at his command, employs a considerable part of it in travelling through Europe, and seeking, in the true spirit of knight-errantry, *whom he may assist.* The frequent opportunities he will meet with of relieving merit in distress, must be to him the highest possible gratification—the most ineffable delight.

* "En entrant dans le monde (says M. le Baron de Montesquieu) on m'annonca comme un homme d'esprit; et je reçus un accueil assez favorable des gens en place; mais lorsque, par le succès des Lettres Persannes, j'eus peut-être prouvé que j'en avais, et que j'eus obtenu quelque estime de la part du public, celle des gens en place se refroidit; j'essuyai mille dégoûts. Comptez, qu'intérieurement blessés de la reputation d'un homme célèbre, c'est pour s'en venger qu'ils l'humilient; et qu'il faut soi-même mériter beaucoup d'éloges, pour supporter patiemment l'éloge d'autrui."

Should I here betray the envy which I in this particular instance feel, the moralist, I hope, will pardon it.

" Quelque chose, Monsieur, s'il vous plait, à un homme le plus miserable du monde."

I instantly turned about to the supplicant. And if thou art really so very wretched, thought I, and such thou dost in truth appear to be, why should I not afford thee some relief? I have little, indeed, to give, and thou mayst even be undeserving of that little.—But how am I to get at the truth of this? And since there is a doubt about the matter, let me rather *err* on the side of humanity. So having settled the debate within myself, I gave him—no great sum, indeed, but more than one usually gives to a beggar.

The wretched mendicant threw himself on his knees, immediately on receiving my alms: not by way of thanking me—no!—he was returning thanks to Heaven, for having directed him to my path.

I felt a sudden warmth about my heart. Good God! cried I, how easily man may purchase happiness to himself, while he is contributing to that of others. The poor fellow whom I had just relieved, and who emphatically styled himself the most miserable of human beings, is at this time happy. But I should have done well in giving him something more, said I: so I instantly followed him, with an intention of doubling the sum; but he was not to be found. Well, well, thought I, I may be fortunate enough to meet him another day.

M. De la Rochefoucault is of opinion,—" Que nous avons tous assez de force pour supporter les maux d'autrui." A wretched and degrading sentiment!—No! let me rather exclaim with Terence—" Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto."

The man of opulence, and of a benevolent heart, considers himself as an agent for the Almighty; and, consequently looks around for objects to whom he may dispense the bounty of his heavenly Master.

THE CONNOISSEUR.

HAGUE.

I NEVER yet visited the Continent without finding that the number of Englishmen, at every town I came to, was infinitely superior to that of any other nation. I may be told, perhaps, that there is nothing new in the remark—I acknowledge it: for it is certainly against the rules I had prescribed to myself; but as it leads me at once to my point, I shall hope to stand excused for the transgression.

Now, of this very great number, more than one half are connoisseurs; that is to say, judges, or at least pretended judges, in painting, statuary, architecture, and possibly every other art.

Sauntering one morning in the Picture Gallery at the Hague, my attention was particularly excited by the harangue of a *connoisseur*. A crowd was gathered about him. He was discoursing of *costume*, *contour*, *coloris*, *&c. &c.*—in a word, there was scarcely a technical term in painting which he did not employ on this occasion; and for some little time I really thought him the character he had assumed, but I was presently undeceived. Walking up to that admirable performance of Paul Potter—a peasant looking on his cattle—he instantly turned from it in disgust, and with this very sage remark—"That the piece was by no means worth viewing, since peasants and cattle, equal to those in the picture, were to be seen at any time in the fields."

It was sufficient—so I quitted the connoisseur, and went to the *Cabinet d'Histoire Naturelle*.

THE MAN OF SORROWS.

HAGUE.

SITTING one evening at the window of the hotel at the Hague, a gentleman passed by who attracted my particular attention. He was dressed in black—his arms were folded—his step measured—and an indescribable air of melancholy sat upon his visage.

The following evening I took my place at the window, as before; Monsieur De C—— was with me. He passed it at precisely the same time that he had done on the preceding day, and seemed equally dejected.

—"There is something extremely singular about the man," said I; "I wish I knew his history."

"I am totally ignorant of it," said Monsieur De C——, "although he has been pleased to rank me among his friends; but, as he has frequently promised me a few particulars in his life, I shall request him to favour us with them now." So he immediately went after him; and, presently returning together, the gentleman, after an apology, on my part, for the curiosity I had shown respecting him, related his story as follows:—

"I am the eldest son of the Chevalier De ——, of an ancient and honourable house in Brittany. My father was a soldier of reputation; but his inheritance was very small. After having served his country for the space of nearly twenty years, he was under the necessity of selling his little estate for the better maintenance and education of a young and numerous family.

"Following the example of my father, I chose the road to glory; and at the commencement of the late war, was promoted to a command in America.

"During my residence there, I unfortunately married a woman who has destroyed my peace of mind for ever. I thought her a paragon of virtue—another Lucretia;

but she proved the Messalina of the age. Her history is so full of—but you must spare me the recital of particulars, and allow me to proceed to the last shocking catastrophe.—I had for some time suspected her of criminal intercourse with an officer in the regiment to which I belonged. I watched them narrowly—I detected them —but ask no more—they perished in their guilt.

"One man only had I acquainted with my design. He earnestly endeavoured to dissuade me from it; talked loudly of its injustice and inhumanity; and advised me, as we were then preparing to return to Europe, to institute a legal process against the seducer.

"'What!' said I; 'to have my name and character bandied about the courts—to subject myself to every species of ridicule—to be scoffed at by the very wretches who have done me the most unpardonable wrong? Inhumanity! No! It were a want of humanity to spare them. They would live, indeed; but they would live in infamy. It is better that they should die.'"

"By Heaven!" exclaimed Monsieur De C——, "there is a savage justice in the blow which you dealt; and should I ever be equally unfortunate with yourself, I solemnly swear to you, that I would act in the same manner."

"Boldly resolved," said the gentleman, embracing him. "Our spirits are congenial. I am proud in calling you my friend."

I was unable to say a word.

"You find," continued he, "that I have actually cause for sorrow: it is, indeed, unspeakably great; but it arises not from compunction or remorse at what I have done. No! I glory in the deed; and my unhappiness is only occasioned by reflecting on the crime which drove me to it."

He ceased: his grief would not allow him to dwell on the subject, and he begged leave to retire.

L'INSENSIBLE.*

HAGUE.

WALKING one evening in the Vyverberg, accompanied by Monsieur De M——, a Frenchman came trippingly up to us, singing. "Ah! my dear Monsieur De M——," said he, "I am heartily glad to see you. Give me joy, my friend—give me joy. I am the happiest fellow on earth. I have just detected my wife in an intrigue, and"—

"And does that occasion your happiness?" said I; looking on him with astonishment.

"Sir!" exclaimed he, rolling his eyes around, and with a kind of self-approving smile.—"Sir!"—

—"But, as I was going to observe to you," said he, turning immediately to Monsieur De M——, "nothing lin the world could be more fortunate. We had long ived unhappily together, and were on the very eve of separation. But in that case, you know, there would have been the devil and all of alimony demanded, while now I shall easily obtain a divorce; and then—tal-de-ral-lal, tal-de-lal-lal—Serviteur!" And away he danced.

"How unlike," cried I, "is man to man! The exquisite sensibility of the son of the Chevalier De —— hurried him absolutely beyond himself; while the nonchalance and indifference of this contemptible coxcomb sets even Nature herself at defiance. Gracious Heaven! he has no more dignity than the fellow who, when kicked, consoled himself with the thought, that the shoe was of Spanish leather."

* The French substantive is here adopted, as conveying a more perfect idea of the character represented, than any expression which the English language will afford.

THE RUFFLES.

HAGUE.

I WAS invited to the *Cercle*.* "Good God!" cried I, turning over my ruffles and stockings, "what paltry things! they will never do for such an occasion—I must undoubtedly purchase others."

Now, both ruffles and stockings were absolutely new, and even of the finest sort; but the fact is, that I wished to frame to myself an excuse for visiting the *petite Bourgeoise*.

It is really very strange; but I felt something like a friendship for her. I wished to see her: I was desirous of speaking with her; but then I had no particular business; and what was to be done in such a case?—Why, I fancied I wanted ruffles.

"Beside," said I to myself, "were I really not in want of these things, it would be but handsome to lay out half a dozen ducats with a woman who has behaved to me so very handsomely."

This determined the matter at once; and I accordingly repaired to her shop.

"Mon cher Monsieur," cried she, "comment vous va-t-il?"—By the way, there is something extremely captivating in that "Mon cher Monsieur," which is so very common with a Frenchwoman: not that I would be thought to insinuate, that a Frenchwoman means any thing by it—I rather imagine she does not. Be that, however, as it may, it is certainly very pleasing, and not unfrequently gains the heart.

I sat down by the counter; and such was the rapidity and agreeableness of her conversation, that I actually

* An assembly held at the Old Court, at the Hague.

forgot to ask for the ruffles, and even never thought about them till I had got back to the hotel.

I returned immediately to the *petite Bourgeoise*, telling her of my absent fit. She laughed immoderately; and, looking fixedly in my face, significantly demanded, "To what it could possibly be owing?"

At this instant, her husband coming to the door, I told her it was impossible for me to answer her question *then;* but that I would take another opportunity of doing it. So, making a pretty low bow to the husband (though I secretly wished him at the Dogger Bank), and a much lower to the wife, I returned forthwith to my hotel; but not without a resolution of shortly seeing the lady again.—The ruffles were still unbought.

CHAGRIN.

HAGUE.

When a man is thoroughly out of humour, he should shut himself up for an hour or two in his closet: it will give him time for reflection, and, consequently, hinder him from acting absurdly.

The husband of the *petite Bourgeoise* had interrupted me in my tête-à-tête with his wife; and I accordingly wished him hanged for it. That was undoubtedly very natural: but why I should quarrel with almost every one who came in my way for some time after (and so it actually happened), I shall leave to the determination of the philosopher. He will account for it in a better manner than I can.

* * * *

I sat down at the Table d'Hôte—every thing was badly drest—the wines were execrable—I was unable to eat my dinner.——

Every other person, nevertheless, found them excellent.

I walked out towards the Voorhout. I met the miserable object whom I had relieved a day or two before, and whom I had wished to see again.

He bowed to me in passing. It was not the bow of entreaty, but rather of gratitude—it seemed to thank me for what I had already given; but not to ask for more.

I looked frowningly on him, and harshly bade him get out of my way.—What an inconsistent creature is man!

REMORSE.

HAGUE.

"AND is it thus," said I to myself, as the humble petitioner walked away, "is it thus I behave towards the indigent and distressed? Is this conducting myself according to the principles of benevolence which I have so frequently laid down as the rule for others? Is this the philanthropy and charity which I have recommended to the attention and practice of all men?

—"But I will go this evening to the opera," said I—"it is not improbable but that music will restore me to my natural complacency and good humour—we know its power in subduing and correcting the passions—

What passion cannot music raise and quell?

Neither are we ignorant of its influence on the manners; and that it will at once inspire pity, tenderness, and love."

I accordingly went to the opera. The music was by that admirable composer Gretri—I was delighted with it.

It is really very surprising, thought I, as I walked from the theatre to the hotel, that the Dutch, who are

seemingly fond of music, and who are certainly good musicians, should not be more generally refined.

The "concord of sweet sounds" operates but little on the *Bourgeoisie* of the Hague.

THE REPULSE.

HAGUE.

I HAVE somewhere met with a writer, who says, that he considers cleanliness as one of the *half-virtues* (as Aristotle very properly calls them, when speaking of some of our lesser perfections); a Dutchwoman certainly considers it as *a whole one.*

No person can be a greater admirer of cleanliness than I am: in this country, however, it is undoubtedly carried to excess; and the *simplex munditiis* of Horace is scarcely ever to be seen. All, in short, is artful and laboured in the extreme.

Returning one morning from the parade, a shower of rain came on when I was about a quarter of a mile from home. I ran immediately towards a house, the door of which was standing invitingly open; but I had scarcely stepped on the threshold, when a number of women and children beset me, and insisted on my instantly turning out. In vain did I represent to them that I had a terrible cold, and that I should certainly be wet to the skin. It was no matter, they said—the house had just been cleaned, and was I to think of dirting it?—"Non, non, sortez d'ici—sortez d'ici," cried they.

"Ma belle! m'amie!" cried I to a frightful old woman—"Ma petite mignonne!" said I to a young one:—but it was all to no effect; they armed themselves with brooms, &c. and actually thrust me into the street.

"Was ever any thing so ridiculous!" said I, as I went dripping into the hotel.—Were a man triple-bound in flannel, and his voice reduced to harsh whispers by a cold, they would inundate his room with water, and kill him to keep him clean.

CIVILITY.

HAGUE.

I HAD engaged a *voiture de louage*, in order to carry me to Haarlem.

And now, thought I, could I have the company of the *petite Bourgeoise*, I would endeavour to make atonement for my incivility to her at Briel. But she is married: it is therefore needless to think about it—the thing is altogether impracticable.

How very greatly a man may be mistaken in these matters!—Fortune, when I least expected it, was actually at work for me, and threw in my way a friend who removed the difficulty at once.

This friend was no other than the husband of the lady in question. He came to the door of the hotel at the moment I was coming out.

"I will show some little civility to M. le Mari, however," said I. So having acquainted him with my intended route, I asked him if he had any occasion for going by it, and offered him a seat in the coach.

He politely answered, that he had not; but that his wife had some particular business at the Blanchisserie at Haarlem; and that if I would have the goodness to set her down—

"Ah! de bon cœur," said I, interrupting him—"J'aurai un vrai plaisir"—

I should have continued talking thus for at least a

quarter of an hour, had not my bon ami left me, pour chercher Madame sa femme.

"This is really a little extraordinary," said I to myself —but jealousy is certainly not to be ranked among the failings of the French. Had this man lived in Sparta, how happy must he have been!

La Fontaine, speaking of a woman's infidelity, says,—

Quand on le sait, c'est peu de chose—
Quand on ne le sait pas, ce n'est rien.

Admirable doctrine!—Rare philosophy!

ADVICE.

ROAD TO HAARLEM.

THE Frenchman presently returned with his wife. She looked enchantingly; there was an air of simplicity and innocence about her. I was in a moralizing mood, and modelled my conversation accordingly.

"You have told me, Madame," said I, laying my hand upon hers, with a chaste and gentle pressure— "you have told me, Madame, that your husband is wholly without suspicion—that jealousy is an absolute stranger to his breast." She fixed her large bright eyes upon me for a moment, as if at a loss to comprehend my meaning. I returned her glance, and thus proceeded:—

"This, I presume, arises not from any insensibility on his part, but from a thorough reliance on the prudence and virtue of his wife—(the lady inclined her head) still, however, he is wrong; and the sentiment of a celebrated Roman on this matter should never be forgotten—'The wife of Cæsar must not even be suspected.'"

"Yet, surely," replied she, in the true spirit of a Frenchwoman, "I may make a *petit voyage* with a friend, without being suspected by any one."

"I don't know that," returned I: "it is an envious and malicious world: a woman cannot be too chary of her reputation and good name—now, the love I bear towards you"——

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed she, attempting to open the door of the chaise, and calling to the postillion to stop——

"Hold!" cried I, "be not frightened by the name—"we will call it friendship, if you please."

She was silent—

"Now, this very friendship," continued I, "induces me to admonish you with freedom. You are young and handsome. Your husband is not a Cæsar; on the contrary, he subjects you to——But I will say no more—you understand me, and will profit, I hope, by my hints."

I saw a tear in the corner of her eye.

This woman, said I to myself, hath an excellent heart—she has virtue; and the prejudices of education are all she has to struggle with. What pity! that the man who ought to be her protector, should—

Leave her fair side thus all unguarded.

—But he is a Frenchman.

I felt more true pleasure in reflecting on the advice I had given to her, than if I had employed my "gayest rhetoric" for her seduction. I thought myself another Scipio in self-command; and when we arrived at Haarlem, I conducted the lady to the hotel with all the attention and respect to which her merit, in my opinion, had very justly entitled her. That night, however, I dreamt that the *petite Bourgeoise* rested her head on——but no matter, I am not a believer in dreams.

THE ORGAN.

HAARLEM.

We arrived at Haarlem a little before noon. The following day was settled for my return to the Hague; and as the business which had brought the *petite Bourgeoise* to Haarlem would necessarily detain her for several hours, I requested that she would give me her company in going back.

I was her *Cavaliere* for the day. So we went immediately to the great church, in order to hear the very capital organ there.—

> But oh! what art can teach,
> What human voice can reach,
> The sacred organ's praise?*

If this be said of the ordinary organ, how shall we find words to describe the instrument built by Christian Mullar? Language fails: I shall therefore content myself with observing of this masterpiece in music-science, that it breathes such "divine enchanting harmony," there could be little wonder, were "an angel to appear—mistaking earth for heaven."†

Twenty or thirty Dutchmen were sauntering about the church, and yet seemingly unmoved!—

* * *

Next morning we returned in safety to the Hague; and when I alighted at the hotel, I found that Monsieur De M—— was waiting for me, with some degree of anxiety. He had been summoned to Amsterdam: he knew I purposed going thither; and as we had travelled together from Helvoet to the Hague, he was desirous of having my company into the North.

* Dryden.

† This organ imitates the sounds of various instruments; as the violin, hautboy, kettle-drum, &c. &c., the notes of several birds; and finally, the human voice; and all with such exquisite truth and delicacy, that the nicest ear may be deceived.

I had every reason to be pleased with him. So having delivered the *petite Bourgeoise* into the hands of her husband—at the same time hinting to him, that he was in possession of a very excellent wife—Monsieur De M—— and I, after a few necessary adjustments, bade a final adieu to the Hague.

THE TRAVELLING TUTOR.

LEYDEN.

I LEFT the Hague with regret. It is, without question, one of the most beautiful places on earth; and as the manners of the people are much more elegant and refined than in any other town of Holland, it is impossible not to be delighted with it.

We were to make some little stay at Leyden; and as Leyden is at no great distance from the Hague, we resolved on going thither in the treckschute. When about to enter, I saw the figure of a female mirrored in the water. I looked into her face, and heaved a sigh; it was not the *petite Bourgeoise*.

Never, I believe, was there a more motley assembly. The company consisted of about thirty persons: among the most distinguished of whom were, a burgomaster and his lady; a player and his mistress; an officer in the Dutch service; a fiddler; a female dancer; and a *maudlin* tutor, attending the "hopes of a family"* (who had been sent from Cambridge, in order to rub off his rust), and leading him about as a proper spectacle for Europe.

What a confusion of tongues! The burgomaster and the officer were deeply engaged in politics: the players

* See those excellent designs by Mr. Bunbury—"The Hopes of the Family"—"The Bear Leader," &c.

were declaiming with vehemence: the fiddler and dancer were talking of musical expression and the graces—while the young Cantab, in imitation of the Nephew in the Comedy of the Gamesters, was continually "throwing a little Greek at us," in order to show his parts.

I was astonished at the noise! In all my former journeyings, the silence observed in a treckschute had given me an idea of the court of Areopagus, among the Greeks; or the monastery of La Trappe, among the French.—Now, however, I could think of nothing but the Tower of Babel.

In about three hours, we arrived at the city of Leyden, celebrated as the birth-place of several eminent men. All our fellow-travellers proceeded immediately to Amsterdam, the tutor and his pupil excepted: we therefore requested them to give us their company.

No man, I think, could surpass the governor in pomposity, or his disciple in dulness. We had scarcely sat down to table, when the former ostentatiously demanded of me,—to what college I belonged? "To the college of wit-crackers,"* said I.—"You are pleasant, Sir," said he; "but I could wish to know in what university you have been bred?" "In Nature's," replied I—

> "Nature, a mother kind alike to all.

She, Sir, has been my teacher; and a charming old woman she is."

"You have no very high opinion, then," said he, somewhat peevishly, "of an university education?"

"Why 'faith," said I, with respect to *Alma Mater*—but my Lord Shaftesbury shall answer for me: I would not willingly offend.†

* The whole college of wit-crackers, &c.—SHAKSPEARE.

† See Dialogues on the Uses of Foreign Travel.

THE PRODIGY.

LEYDEN.

THE maître d'hôtel at Leyden was by far the most obliging of any of that class whom I had hitherto met with in my tour.

He begged leave to conduct us about the town; and, in our return towards the evening, observed that he had something particular to point out to us.

"It is," said he, "an absolute prodigy—a husband bewailing the loss of his wife after an interval of nearly twenty years."

He then took us to the top of Hengist's Castle, which is situate in the centre of the city; and played the part of Asmodeus* to admiration: he could not unroof the houses, indeed; but he amused us with numerous anecdotes of the people.

"Observe that man," said our conductor, "who is coming from his house to the garden: he is the person I spoke to you about. Yonder temple is erected to the memory of his lady, and thither does he retire at stated hours to weep and pray—and this has been his daily practice from the moment of her decease."

"Is it possible!" thought I; "and is there still such true, such genuine virtue upon earth?" The elegant Hume, indeed, informs us, "that Eugenius was the husband of Emira—that Emira died at an early age; and that, as in her lifetime, Eugenius had celebrated her birth-day with festivity and joy, so now he religiously keeps it with sorrowing and tears."

What a beautiful picture! But this man—O! for the pen of a Sterne to describe the emotions of my heart; but it were needless to attempt it.—Like then

* The *Diable Boiteux* of Le Sage.

to the painter of antiquity, who, in his most celebrated performance, concealed the face of him whose sorrows he thought himself unable to portray, I draw a veil across my subject; and leave those feelings to be imagined, which I find it impossible to express.

THE FEMALE WIT.

LEYDEN.

"HEY-DAY!" exclaimed I, on walking along the principal streets of Leyden, and meeting scarcely a hundred people: "and is this a city? Alas! what terrible symptoms of decay! Little appearance of either trade or manufactures: magnificent houses, yet half of them untenanted; while the remaining impoverished inhabitants, looking up to the university for support, find their expectations defeated by the present paucity of its students. 'Tis pity!"

One thing, however, is greatly in favour of the place: the booksellers' shops are numerous. I had stepped into one of the principal of them, to inquire if there was any thing new, when a lady came in, and asked for the "Systême de la Nature of Mirabaud." I was not a little surprised, that a young and beautiful woman should come in search of an atheistical book; and when she had quitted the shop, I mentioned this to the master of it.

"That lady," replied the bookseller, "is a singular character: she has written several pieces of note; particularly one, intitled 'Pensées sur l'Ame des Femmes;' in which she considers the notable inquiry, 'Whether woman be possessed of a soul?' with infinite pleasantry and good humour."

"This must be an extraordinary woman, indeed," said I; "I wish I were acquainted with her—but give me leave to look at her book?"

The bookseller answered, that he had not one in his shop; but that if I had any inclination for half an hour's conversation with the lady, he was acquainted with a literary gentleman, who, he was sure, would introduce me to her.

I assured him, that nothing could be more agreeable to me; but that, as my companion, Mons. de M——, was desirous of getting forward on his journey, I should take the opportunity of calling on him in my return; which having determined on doing, I thanked him for his attentions, and repaired to my hotel.

Early next morning, we pursued our journey to Amsterdam.

A TRIP TO HOLLAND.

PART II.

WITH OBSERVATIONS ON THE DUTCH.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE SECOND PART.

THE success of his former "Trip to Holland" has induced the Author to publish a second. He had taken Sterne for a model, without meaning at all times to copy his manner, which is uniformly narrative. The Second Part, therefore, is chiefly an account of the people in general; their manners and customs. The characters of individuals have, for the most part, gone before.—The book, it is hoped, will answer to its title.

A TRIP TO HOLLAND.

Now then, in like manner with my deceased, but never-to-be-forgotten parent, Mr. Tristram Shandy,* I shall begin this portion—

—"Have a care, Sir—keep clear of imitation—remember Horace—'O imitatores, servum pecus!'"

"A little patience, good Mr. Critic."

"And this, Madam, is your son? Bless me! how extremely like his father! Every look, every action, every feature, I protest! What a wonderful imitation!"

"Imitation?" My dear Sir, what are you thinking about? Imitation is the work of art; and the likeness of my son to his father is merely the effect of nature: you surely"——

"True, Madam, true—you are certainly right—and pray, Mr. Aristarchus, do you not imagine that there may be the same homogeneity, the same spontaneity—(will your honours allow me talk thus?)—in a word, do you not imagine that there may be a resemblance of soul, as well as of body? And that Nature may sometimes operate with the one, in exactly the same manner that she so frequently operates with the other? Consider this attentively; and when you meet with a writer

* The Reviewers have acknowledged the relationspip, so no one, I hope, will dispute it.

who has caught the style and manner of an excellent original, do not be so ready to cry out, a 'servile imitator!' No, no; if you really perceive a likeness, honestly acknowledge it; and, in the spirit of a true-born Englishman, boldly pronounce him 'a chip of the old block.'"*

"A chip of the old block,"—what a vulgar expression! exclaims the critic—but 'tis done, 'faith; and I never blot—what shall I do?—Why I must e'en shelter myself, with Terence, behind a scrap of Latin—*Ex homine hunc natum dicas.*

"Well but, my dear Sir, if you, who are so very bad a swimmer, will thus foolishly venture out of your depth, and run the hazard of drowning, is it my fault? Or if you will pursue an *ignis fatuus*, a will-o'th'wisp, and by that means tumble into a pit, can I possibly help it?—Do look at yonder cloud, now—there, that in the shape of a camel†—you see it, do you not?"

"See it? impossible! why, Sir, had I the eye of an eagle"——

"Prithee, Aristarchus, walk this way—step with me into yonder classical—'psha! what a blunder!—into yonder chirurgical school—observe that anatomist there—see how very awkwardly he holds his pen!—his scalpel, I mean. Do, young gentleman, prithee take care: you will certainly cut yourself instead of the

* "It is, perhaps, juster to say, that a previous correspondency of *character* impelled to *imitate*, than that imitation itself produced that correspondency of *character*: at least, it will be allowed to incline a writer strongly to *imitation*; and, where a congenial spirit appears to provoke him to it, a candid critic will not be forward to turn this circumstance to the dishonour of his *invention*."

Again——

"The most original writer as certainly takes a *tincture* from the authors in which he has been most conversant, as water, from the beds of earth or minerals, it hath happened to run over."—Bishop Hurd *on Imitation.*

But you had better read the whole Essay.

† This is not an imitation, but a quotation.—But if any critic would rather choose to consider it as plagiarism, I have not the smallest objection.

subject you are preparing to dissect—you will indeed. Slash! there, 'tis done—did I not tell you so? My dear Sir, how can you be so .....".

"Here now I hold up half a dozen lights, as my father would have said—you understand me?—You perceive the *ἀναλογία*?"

"Um?—Eh?—What the deuce are you talking about?"

"My good Sir, how can you be so stupid.—Well, but you see the"——

"See—why, good heavens, Mr. Shandy, I am placed directly against the sun."

"Cry you mercy, Sir—I really never thought of that."

"My dear Sir, how can you be so" * * * * *

I had at first a violent inclination to have made up the above line entirely of stars and dashes. It would have puzzled "those rogues, the critics," as Bayes expresses it.—But then I might have been told, that my book was either dull or obscure, or—though, by the way, I think it no little compliment to the reader, to leave him something to discover.—Aye, and it will hold good in other cases too; and yonder matronly lady is entirely of my opinion; for if nothing be concealed—

—Do, my dearest Lydia, think of this in your dress; and when next you appear in public, leave a little for the imagination.

THE TRAVELLER.

ROAD TO BODEGRAVE.

WHAT should we think of a traveller, who, in all his journeyings, had never wandered from the beaten road? Who had never even looked either to the right hand or to the left, however beautiful the prospect, however

diversified the scene? Should we not think him the most foolish, and the most insensible of men? And might we not, with infinite reason, condemn him for his want of taste?

In such a manner, however, does the ordinary reader *travel* through a book. Any passage which is not immediately understood—any thing, in short, which requires a particular investigation, is hastily and inconsiderately passed over: in a word, nothing is sought after, and nothing is esteemed, but what is lying absolutely on the surface.

* * * * *

I am now arrived at Bodegrave: at which place, with your leave, Messieurs, we will make some little stay; for the road I have lately travelled through has been so very thick bestrewed with thorns, that—

"Your last stage, Sir, was, I think, from Leyden to Bodegrave.—It must have been a terrible journey, indeed!"

"The most delightful one in nature, Sir. The beauty, the fertility of the country surpasses"—

"Well, but if the road is so entirely covered with thorns"——

"Thorns!—the road to Bode—Hey-day! what a time has an author of this!—Why, Sir, you had better throw aside the book. I was speaking of the thorny road of criticism, through which I have so lately travelled. Ha! ha! your observation reminds me—Why, thou art certainly descended in a right line from Captain Tobias Shandy. My dear Sir, I am heartily glad to see you."*—

"Well, but if you were going to Amsterdam, what the plague are you doing at Bodegrave?—Why, Sir, the direct line from Leyden to Amsterdam"—

"But, Sir, I seldom move in a direct line—'tis so

* "'Tis a pity, said my father, considering the ingenuity these learned men have shown in their solutions of noses—Can noses be dissolved? said my uncle Toby."—*Tristram Shandy*, vol. iii. p. 45.

dull, so mechanical.* What! dost imagine that I am under the necessity of travelling in as direct a line as a curate to his church; or as Doctor Slop to Shandy-Hall, when his obstetric aid was wanted by my grandmother? No, Sir, no—I generally proceed in a curve—and a curve being the true line of beauty (as either Mr. Hogarth,† or yonder crooked gentleman will inform you‡), it is my intention to pursue it invariably throughout my travels:—Aye, and if you employ the whole of your sagacity, you may possibly discover that I keep it regularly (or irregularly, if you like it better) in my account of them too."

"A word in your ear. If the public be pleased with this little book, I will publish an account of my journey into Switzerland, in spite of all the —— critics in the universe."§

—"But this is nothing to my travels, so I twice—twice beg pardon for it." Allons!

DISAPPOINTMENT.

LEYDEN.

Monsieur de Montfaucon and I were so heartily tired of the ordinary conveyance by the treckschute, that we determined on changing our mode of travelling; and

* For once, however, I should have proceeded immediately from Leyden to Amsterdam, merely to oblige my companion, Monsieur De M. But as that gentleman received information at Bodegrave, that his presence at Amsterdam was not so immediately requisite as had been at first intimated to him, he consented to our proceeding to that place by the more agreeable route of Bodegrave, Utrecht, &c.

† See Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty. ‡ See Hay's Essay on Deformity.

§ This must not be understood as alluding to the periodical publications called *Reviews*, &c., the writers of which have spoken of my former works with candour and impartiality.

accordingly engaged a chaise to carry us from Leyden to Amsterdam.

I was particularly careful in providing a large and commodious carriage, and kept it above an hour at the door of the hotel. What, no pretty damsel who may be going either to Utrecht or Amsterdam?—Diable!—But not a single Frenchwoman had I met with in the city of Leyden; and a Dutch vrow is infinitely too prudish to think of requesting a place in your carriage, or of even accepting it, were you to make her the offer.

As my cruel stars would have it, not a Frenchwoman presented herself; so we proceeded immediately to Bodegrave, a pretty little village, distant about twelve or thirteen miles from Leyden.

We had altered our manner of travelling, not so much on account of the disagreeableness of the treckschute, as for the sake of expedition; but even here we were disappointed. Two hours and a quarter were taken up in passing from Leyden to Bodegrave;—yet this is what a Dutchman calls *posting*. An English waggon would have gone it in the time.

The postillion (who, by the way, had rather the appearance of a bear than a human being) was as deaf to my persuasions as to my remonstrances.—"Get on, my good lad," said I, "get on;" jingling a florin against the glass of the chaise, and taking care to hold the flat side towards him as he looked back. But nothing could work upon him; and he looked to the full as sulky, as though I had threatened him with a beating. Once, indeed, he cried out, "Ya! ya!" which had I not known that it is Dutch for "yes," I should have concluded from his manner of proceeding, that its signification was totally the reverse.

I have already observed, that the country between Bodegrave and Leyden is particularly beautiful; indeed, I scarcely ever remember to have met with a more enchanting prospect; and this prospect is considerably heightened by the great number of truly elegant houses

that are to be discovered whichever way you turn the eye. The only objection that can be made to it is, that there is rather too much of water; but as the day on which I travelled was particularly warm and fine, the brightness and transparency of that element added greatly to the splendour of the scene.

There is a good inn at Bodegrave, the mistress of which is not only handsome, but obliging.

THE DECLARATION.

UTRECHT.

I WILL now inform the reader (though I have possibly done it already), that he is not to expect in this my "Trip to Holland," any account of pictures, statues, edifices, or gardens. No; there is a sufficient variety of books to serve him as a guide in his peregrinations: I am only writing for his amusement, and shall not say a word on the subject, because I think enough has been said about them already.

Thus much, however, I have thought proper to set down, lest the curious inquirer should have looked for any particular description of the magnificent edifices, &c. which are certainly to be seen in Leyden.

I must here observe, too, that I have not brought home a single butterfly, stone, or medal, to add to the cabinet of the virtuoso; and what, perhaps, will be thought still more extraordinary, I have not even procured a sooterkin, to enrich the museum of the naturalist.

"Well," demands the pretty gentleman, "but how have you been employed in your present trip?—Have you brought over any particular account of the fashions —the newest cut for a coat, the"——

"Fashions! cut of a coat! Why, my dear Sir, the cut of a Dutchman's coat is very nearly the same that it was a hundred years ago."

"The same that it was a hundred years ago! *Ah! les barbares!* how could you possibly live among them? For my part, were I to continue the same fashion above the space of a hundred days, I should appear the most ridiculous animal, the most"——

"Very likely, Sir—you are not altogether wrong, I believe: but a fine taste, you know, is not wholly the effect of art; and if Nature has been somewhat parsimonious in her gifts to the Hollander, let him have your pity, and not your ridicule.—Yet he sleeps well; enjoys his beer, butter, and smoke, without a murmur; and if he chances to grow a good size, full-visaged, and broad-sterned, he is sure to be made either a counsellor or a burgomaster."

THE DUTCH COMMENTATOR.

UTRECHT.

The town of Utrecht, like to every town of Holland (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and the Hague excepted), is dull and unworthy of notice. The environs, however, are delightful; notwithstanding which, it is very unusual to meet with any of the inhabitants on foot, saving the place in which they may actually reside. If a Dutchman has occasion to go but a mile or two from home, he throws himself into a treckschute or a chaise. This undoubtedly injures the health; and it must be in a great measure owing to inactivity and indolence that the people of this country are so very corpulent and badly shaped.

Monsieur de M—— and I were walking at a little

distance from the town, when a gentleman passed us in an elegant carriage, and in which, from his extreme rotundity, he was scarcely able to sit. Observing that my companion moved his hat to him, I had the curiosity to make inquiry as to his name and profession.

"His name," said Monsieur de M——, "is Vander Blonder; and his profession is that of historian and commentator."

"An author!" exclaimed I; "and with that prodigious load of flesh!"—looking first at Monsieur de M—— (who, by the way, is to the full as thin as I am), and then at myself—"an author!—is it possible?"

"Yes," returned Monsieur de M——, "he is, indeed, an author; and a very successful one, too; not that his success has been owing to his merit, but to his friends. You know the general character of a Dutch or German commentator; and he is one of the dullest. A concurrence of fortunate circumstances, however, added to a bold and confident address, have placed him, as you see, in his carriage."

"He appears, indeed," said I, "to be very greatly pampered; and I have observed, that the literary people of this country make, for the most part, a very different appearance from those of England, or even from those of France: and the Mæcenases of Holland do not attend to the advice of one of your kings (Charles the Ninth, if I remember right), who was accustomed to say, 'Equi et poetæ alendi sunt, non saginandi.' Poets and horses should be fed, and not fattened.—No bad idea; and yet the horses that I have hitherto seen, are to the full as unwieldy as their owners."

"*Apropos* of poets," said I: "Pray is there a living one to be found in Holland?"

"Not that I know," returned Monsieur de M——; "a Dutch versifier is a *rara avis*, indeed. There has been none of any repute, I think, since the days of Vondel. Vondel," continued he, "was really a good poet; and he has sufficiently proved, by his writings,

that the Dutch language (however grating to the ear of an Englishman) is by no means deficient in harmony and sweetness of numbers."

* * *

Poesy has been called by one of the Fathers *vinum dæmonum ;*—and the Hollander seems to have nearly the same idea of it. But how could people so very corpulent read Hudibras ; or, without endangering each other's sides, attempt to laugh ? They might be choked by a joke, or be in danger of exploding, through swallowing too much smoke while they were merry : they would never grow fat but under a grave commentator, who best knows what words are the most conducive to sleep.

DRESS.

UTRECHT.

The ladies of Holland, in general, think so little of personal decoration, that they appear to infinite disadvantage when compared with the Parisian females, of whom there is a considerable number at the Hague.

There is something really distressing in finding the charms of a youthful woman so greatly obscured by her dress. I agree entirely with the poet, that—

> Loveliness needs not the foreign aid of ornament—

And with the other, who so elegantly observes—

> Th' adorning thee with so much art,
> Is but a barbarous skill;
> 'Tis like the pois'ning of a dart,
> Too apt before to kill.

But there is a very essential difference between a plain and simple attire, and a remarkably ill-chosen suit.

The former, we must acknowledge, will contribute little to the beauty of the object; but the latter will, in some degree, most assuredly destroy its effect.

"Pray, Madam," said I (it was a woman to whom I could put the question), "Pray, Madam, how often do the ladies of this country vary their mode of dress?"

"Not once in a dozen years," returned the lady: "we are no way given to parade; but, on the contrary, are provident, economical, obedient.—A Dutchwoman," added she, and with an archness, not very common with her countrywomen, "makes a very excellent wife."

"I do not doubt it," replied I; "and were I in search of a companion for life"—— But I remembered that no man in Holland is allowed to do himself justice, or to bestow any matrimonial correction upon his *rib;* for, however much she might deserve it, the poor husband would suffer a year or two's imprisonment for doing himself justice. I have also heard that a Dutchwoman will crack nuts and eat apples while her lover is declaring his passion, which, by the way, he often does seated on the floor; but that is, they say, to rest himself after kneeling.

A REFLECTION.

UTRECHT.

ALTHOUGH the man who is without any positive excellence, may be considered by many as a worthy member of society, he is not, in my opinion, a character to be esteemed.

Negative virtue can only be entitled to a negative kind of praise; and to observe of any one that there is nothing to censure in his conduct, is, in fact, advancing very little in his favour. It is by the active and social

principles alone that a human being maintains his superiority in the creation:—these excluded from his breast, he can be considered as little better than an automaton; and the French Materialist, when he published his "Man, a Machine," must have been led into the opinion that his position was founded, by viewing us in this disgraceful and artificial state.

The Dutch are too much like machines. Pardon me, Sophronius; I speak with an exception to your friend. I have waited on the man to whom you gave me letters of recommendation, and find him to be every thing that I could wish—open, generous, candid, and sincere. He received me in a truly agreeable manner: not with the civility of a Frenchman, but with the hospitality of a Briton; and were every Hollander like to him, his countrymen might very justly vie with the most refined and polished nations in the world.

GRAVITY.

UTRECHT.

The Dutch are, without question, the most serious people upon earth. It is true, indeed, that there is an amazing deal of gravity both in the Englishman and the Spaniard; but neither of these are, in this particular, any way comparable to the Hollander. The Dutchman appears to be reserved from nature (for though he so very rarely laughs, he has certainly never read Lord Chesterfield; or if perchance he has, I will venture to engage that he has never studied him), the Englishman from education, and the Spaniard, I believe, from pride.

It may appear incredible to many, perhaps, but I solemnly declare, that I never saw a Dutchman laugh

but once; and that was physically accounted for, by his ingenuously acknowledging that his mother was a Frenchwoman. Dutchmen appear as incapable of being moved as a torpid tortoise;—were a cannon-ball to drop at their feet, they would just lift up their heavy eyes and look at one another, then sit and smoke for the next three hours in wonder and silence.

An eminent French writer has demanded—"D'où vient que l'on rit si librement au théâtre, et que l'on a honte d'y pleurer? Est-il moins dans la nature de s'attendrir sur le pitoyable que d'éclater sur le ridicule?" The question is undoubtedly a pertinent one; but had the Frenchman attended to the character of this people, he would have asked it with an exception to *them*.

I really considered myself as the gravest and austerest man existing, till I had got among the Dutch; but they presently convinced me, that, compared with them, I had very little pretension to any thing like stoicism or severity of manners. A celebrated writer has observed of them, that "No people receive misfortunes with less emotion. Let what accident soever befal them, they comfort themselves that something worse might have happened. If they chance to break a leg or an arm, they feel thankful that they have not broken their necks. If a tempest at sea sinks some of their vessels, they bless Heaven for sparing the rest; or if their houses are burnt down by fire, they believe that they are favourably dealt with if they themselves escape."

Many of the women, however, are of a very different complexion; and I found that some of them were as merry little rogues as ever glanced from under an arched eyebrow.

CURIOSITY.

UTRECHT.

The Hollander, like to the Mussulman, very seldom quits his country; and never, I believe, through choice: as to those who are to be seen in India, they are driven thither by the love of money, and are therefore to be considered apart. But the Dutch gentleman, the independent man, is very rarely to be found on his travels; and all of this nation who are to be met with at any time in England, or indeed in any other country, are pretty uniformly engaged in trade.

Speaking with a Dutchman on the subject of travel, I found him very much astonished at the great number of Englishmen that annually visit Holland. As they were not employed in traffic, he could not possibly conceive the motive, he said, for their coming thither in such a crowd.

"Their motive," said I, "is no doubt curiosity."

"Curiosity," replied he, "is so very vague, so indefinite a term"——

"Pardon me," returned I, "my meaning is fixed and determinate. I allude not to that pitiful, paltry curiosity which examines into, and seeks out the faults and failings of our neighbours; but that grand and noble spirit of inquiry which stretches from pole to pole; and which, consequently, enlarges and improves the mind; while the former only debases it. The inquisitiveness I am speaking of is highly worthy of praise, and may be compared to the vessel of the Danaides, which could never be filled.

An Englishman can experience no pleasurable sensations on entering the city of Utrecht, unless he has entirely forgotten the Barrier Treaty, and the uneasiness it occasioned to the worthy Captain Shandy.

THE COMPARISON.

AMSTERDAM.

"THIS city"—said I, on walking up the principal street at Amsterdam, and observing the hurry and bustle that generally prevailed throughout the whole—"this city is by no means the place for a sentimentalist."

The care and anxiety that were to be seen on every brow, sufficiently indicated what was going on within. Much of this, it is true, is daily to be observed in London; but the trading people of England are wonderfully different in their appearance, and even in their manners, from those of Amsterdam, and indeed of any town in Holland.

There is so little of the gentleman (generally speaking) in the exterior of the Hollander, that were it not for his good heart, one should naturally become prejudiced against him.

The English have been styled by Monsieur de Voltaire the *savages of Europe*. If by *savage* he meant a rude and boorish behaviour, he might have found it much nearer home: if, on the other hand, he meant it as expressive of cruelty and injustice, he should rather have applied the epithet to his countrymen. Witness —and without adducing any other instance—their treatment of their prisoners of war.

At Amboyna, indeed! But let us endeavour to forget the story.

THE PROPOSAL.

AMSTERDAM.

TIME, one morning, hanging somewhat heavily on my hands, it was proposed to me that I should *amuse* myself, by looking into the prison called the Rasphouse; but I declined the recreation. Could I have visited it with the motives and philanthropy of a Howard, I had very possibly obeyed the summons.

It is observed by an eminent writer (speaking of the human affections), that a man will stand upon the beach and view a sinking vessel with delight; that the struggles of the wretched mariners will even afford him a particular pleasure; but that this pleasure arises not from the sight of his fellow-creatures in distress, but merely from reflecting on his own situation, and knowing that he is safe.

On a like principle there may, perhaps, be found the men who will enter a prison with satisfaction. From slavery thus contemplated, they may possibly enjoy their own freedom in a much greater degree. But the mind of such a man is evidently vitiated and diseased; and however philosophically we may attempt to account for such a principle in him, or labour to prove it a propensity in our nature, I am much rather inclined to consider it as accidental, or even foreign to us, and very rarely to be found.

—O Liberty! sweet, enchanting Liberty! how seldom art thou acknowledged, how little art thou understood! 'Tis with thee, alas! as with health, whose grand and sovereign virtues we are apt to ridicule and contemn, until she has irrevocably and fatally withdrawn from us her sacred influence and power, even as we value the sunshine most after long days of gloominess.

FRIENDSHIP.

AMSTERDAM.

STROLLING one evening into the great church at Amsterdam, I perceived a gentleman in an aisle of it, who was leaning on a tomb; and weeping and praying alternately. His orisons were continued for about the space of a quarter of an hour; he then drew forth a picture, looked on it for some time attentively, replaced it in his bosom, and again began to weep.

—"My life on 't," cried I to Monsieur de M——, "'tis the tomb of his wife." "'Tis more likely," returned he, "if one may judge from his behaviour, to be the tomb of his mistress." We were both mistaken. I made inquiry into the matter, and found it to be the sepulchre of his friend.

He had lost in this man every thing that was dear to him. Alas! unhappy gentleman, I weep at thy misfortune:—my best wishes shall accompany thee; and mayst thou meet with some one tender-hearted as thyself, to soothe and relieve thy sorrows!

—Hail to thee, Friendship! eternal, inexhaustible source of happiness to man! 'Tis thou, alone, that canst bid the wretched and desponding mortal once more raise his head. At sight of thee, misery forgets her cares—sickness her ills—and penury her wants. Possessed of thee, every object that surrounds us takes a brighter and a livelier hue. Thy influence denied, and all Nature seems a void.

O!—worthiest and most benevolent of men, accept the tribute of a heart overflowing with affection, zeal, and gratitude!

THE LITERARY CLUB.

AMSTERDAM.

I HAD been about a week in Amsterdam, when I was agreeably surprised by the appearance of Monsieur de C——. He had come to that city, he said, with a view of soliciting subscriptions to his book.

"Alas!" cried I, "you have here, I believe, but little chance of success; for, unless your performance will instruct the inhabitants in the way that they may the more immediately increase their wealth, the buyers of it will be but few.

"In that particular," replied Monsieur de C——, "you are somewhat mistaken. Amsterdam can boast of several literary men; and the patrons and encouragers of good writing are by no means rare. I am now going to a meeting of the literati of this city," continued he: "favour me, therefore, with your company:—they all speak French; and I shall be glad to have your opinion of them."

I willingly agreed to the proposal; and in a little time we arrived at the appointed place.

The company consisted of ten or twelve Dutchmen. The first thing demanded on my introduction was, "Monsieur, est-il auteur?" The question was an unexpected one; and not knowing my cue, or the rules and orders of the society, I was a little at a loss for a reply. It is very certain, indeed, that I had no pretensions to rank as an author; but having taken the resolution of publishing an account of my travels when I should arrive in London, I boldly replied in the affirmative. This was not altogether honest; but yet, said I to myself, as I shall, no doubt, acquire some little reputation by my writings, there can be no great harm in thus anticipating my fame—So, as I before observed, I courageously answered "Yes."

I was, however, stripped of my feathers, after all; for on being questioned as to the line of literature in which I had employed my pen, I was under the necessity of acknowledging that my works were yet in embryo; but that I had visited Holland with an intention of giving a sketch of the character of its inhabitants: so that, strictly speaking, I was only an author in idea.

I was a little disconcerted by this affair; but somewhat relieved from my embarrassment, by one of the company declaring, that as Monsieur had an intention of becoming a writer, he should undoubtedly be considered as such; and that it was *tout un.*

The gentleman who had thus become my defender, informed me that he was engaged in an undertaking nearly similar to my own, and that he should shortly give his performance to the world. I requested to be indulged with a sight of it; and finding it to be really a curiosity, I have transcribed a passage or two, which I shall lay before the public; together with a translation for the use of the country gentlemen; as I am particularly desirous that so exquisite a *morçeau* should be universally read.

It may be necessary, however, to remind the reader that the writer of the book is a Dutchman, which, from the peculiar modesty of the sentiments in the extract here given, it would be almost impossible for him to discover.

"La Hollande est sans contredit le pays du monde le plus agréable. Il n'y a rien à desirer qu'elle ne contient. On y trouve des gens les plus polis et les plus honnêtes: il n'y a pas, dans toute l'Europe, de telles villes—soit qu'elles sont considerées par rapport à leur grandeur ou à leur magnificence———

* * * * *

— "Où trouverez-vous, par exemple, des loix si humaines, si salutaires, et en même temps si efficaces?— C'est ici qu'on jouit de cette liberté dont on fait mention dans quelques autres contrées, mais dont on ne sait que le nom.

"Quant aux femmes, je n'en dirai rien—pour dire vrai, il me manque des paroles. Elles sont si belles, si vertueuses——&c. &c."

"Holland is indisputably the finest country in the world. Not a single wish need there remain ungratified. Nothing can equal the politeness and liberality of the people. Europe, considered collectively, cannot boast of such grand and magnificent cities.

* * * * *

— "Where will you find laws so mild, yet admirable in their effects? It is here that men enjoy that liberty which is talked of in other countries; but of which they only know the name.

"As to the women, I shall not attempt a description of them—language fails me. They are so beautiful, so virtuous——&c. &c."

After perusing a few more pages, equally simple and unostentatious as the above, I returned the writer his manuscript: at the same time thanking him with a very grave face for the entertainment it had afforded me.

The conversation then became general; and having staid till I was nearly suffocated by the smoke from the Dutchmen's pipes, I found myself compelled to bid my friend and his associates a somewhat early and abrupt adieu.

OPINION.

AMSTERDAM.

MONSIEUR DE C—— came to me the next morning to know my opinion of the literary club. I had been amusing myself for about an hour, in translating a page or two from Hudibras—so, when the Dutchman arrived and inquired into my sentiments respecting his friends, I answered him in nearly the following manner:—

> Le Hollandais, sans contredit,
> A du bons sens;—pour bel esprit
> Il ne le fait voir que rarement:
> De même que son beau vêtement.

He was a little displeased at this, and answered me somewhat sharply, that—"Quant aux Hollandais, il fallait beaucoup de temps pour les connaître parfaitement, et pour decouvrir toutes leurs bonnes qualités." "Vous avez raison," said I, smiling, "je le crois bien."

He shortly after left me, hurt, no doubt, by my reply. But let it be remembered, that, however severely I may occasionally speak of the Hollander, I always mean it with an exception to Monsieur de C——, and some few of his countrymen whom I have likewise the honour of knowing.

It is admitted, however, on all hands, that there is very little in this people of what can properly be called genius. Much good sense is, unquestionably, to be found among them; but as to fancy, or imagination, they very rarely exercise it.—In a word, they experience nothing of that divine, that glorious faculty of the soul, which so frequently urges other men to enterprises and discoveries, truly noble and sublime.*

* Erasmus, in the person of Folly, thus speaks of the Brabanters, and of his countrymen, the Dutch:—

"It is observed of the people of Brabant, that contrary to the adage of older and wiser, the more ancient they grow the more fools they are; and

How would a Dutchman laugh, were one to repeat to him the beautiful stanzas of an old English rhymester, who thus begins his poem—

My mind to me a kingdom is.

But let me not forget the advice which I have given to the fashionable gentleman, when speaking on the subject of taste, at the beginning of the volume.

OBSTINACY.

AMSTERDAM.

"No! if I do, I 'm a Dutchman," exclaimed I. There is nothing vulgar in this, I hope—Egad, I am a little afraid—for in that case, I shall, no doubt, be told by the critics.—Monsieur Diderot has observed—"Le rôle d'un auteur est un rôle assez vain: c'est celui d'un homme qui se croit en état de donner des leçons au public. Et le rôle du critique? Il est bien plus vain encore; c'est celui d'un homme qui se croit en état de donner des leçons à celui qui se croit en état d'en donner au public."

"L'auteur dit: Messieurs, écoutez-moi, car je suis votre maître. Et le critique: C'est moi, Messieurs, qu'il faut écouter, car je suis le maître de vos maîtres."

Now, if this be said of authors and critics, how great, how very great, must be the arrogance and self-suffi-

yet there is not any one country whose inhabitants enjoy themselves better, or rub through the world with more ease and quiet. To these are nearly related, as well by affinity of customs, as of neighbourhood, my friends the Hollanders;—mine I may well call them, for they stick so close and lovingly to me, that they are styled fools, to a proverb, and yet scorn to be ashamed of their name."

— But if this character of the Hollander be admitted as for the most part just, whoever has read the "Moriæ Encomium" will acknowledge, that there is at least one exception to it.

ciency of the hypercritic!—No! I will never attempt it. If I do, I 'll be shot.

But as the reader may possibly be surprised at my having employed so unclassical an expression as that at the head of the chapter, I will tell him what occasioned it.

Among the several peculiarities and excellencies of the Hollander, obstinacy is not in the lowest rank; and were a man possessed of the patience of an Epictetus or a Socrates, he would run some little hazard of losing it in a country like this.

I had engaged a chaise to carry me a few miles out of town. Now, the driver of it would not only go the road and pace which were the most agreeable to himself, but insisted on taking me to a house which I had been particularly cautioned to avoid. The contest was warm between us; and at length, on his requesting that I would put up at the hotel he had chosen for me, I hastily answered—and by way of proving that I would maintain my point—No! if I do, I 'm a Dutchman!

Thus did I foil him at his own weapon, and so the matter ended.

BENEVOLENCE.

AMSTERDAM.

Immediately on my return to Amsterdam, I determined on paying a visit to Monsieur de C——. The manner in which I had spoken to him of his countrymen had something like ill-nature in it. It is very certain, however, that I had not the smallest intention of giving him offence; and I could not any longer endure the idea of having made "one worthy man my foe."

I have already informed the reader that Monsieur de C—— was by no means rich. What, then, was my surprise on entering his chamber, to find him surrounded by a numerous train of suitors, to whom he was dealing out his largesses with a free and liberal hand.

When these people had retired, I was thus addressed by Monsieur de C——:

"You must, no doubt, be astonished at finding the man who is himself soliciting pecuniary aid, so seemingly prodigal in his bounty to others;—but when I have acquainted you with the circumstances attending it, I shall hope to escape unblamed. Know then, that I have been particularly successful in my subscription. The men who just now left me are authors and critics by profession; I have known them even from my boyish days: with some of them, too, I have been connected. We were fellow-labourers in the literary mine. They heard of my arrival in Amsterdam; and almost sinking with the weight of misery, implored my succour with streaming eyes. I had money in my purse: could I see them perish at my door in want?"

"You speak of a matter that does you honour," said I; "as though it stood in need of a particular apology. What occasion can there be for that?"

"Alas!" cried he, "I am well acquainted with the prejudices and hasty conclusions of the world. It will be whispered that I have been lavish of my means—few will inquire into the motives that prompted me to it—I shall be considered as a weak and improvident man, and possibly be condemned unheard. Such are my apprehensions. Such are the ideas I have formed to myself."

—This stroke in the picture of Monsieur de C——, I shall beg leave to consider as the finishing one.

So after advising this my friend (for such must I consider him) to read a page or two in Epictetus, by way of consoling himself for the injustice and capriciousness of mankind, I bade him a truly affectionate adieu.

THE ADDRESS.

AMSTERDAM.

THE benevolence of Monsieur de C—— had made so deep an impression on my mind, that I continued reflecting on it for several days. And shall such a man, said I to myself, remain wholly unprovided for? Is there no one who will recommend him to the notice and protection of his prince? Willingly would I make the essay, indeed;—but what can a stranger possibly effect? Willingly, too, would I address our potentates, in the words of Sultan Balin to his son: "Spare no pains to find men of genius, learning, and courage; you must cherish them by your beneficence, that they may prove the soul of your council, and the sword of your power."*—And happy should I be in finding them ready to attend to the precepts of so wise and good a king.

THE HOBBY-HORSE.

AMSTERDAM.

"TOUT homme à ses bizzarreries."—"Every man has his hobby-horse." Now, if it be a beast that the rider can rely on, he may canter, gallop, walk, or trot, as shall be the most agreeable to him, and no one will think of opposing his way. The man of abilities, however, will be seen in one or other of the former paces: the plodder always in the latter.

I never met with a Dutchman who could be said to ride his hobby with grace or spirit. Very unlike the

* See Dow's History of Hindostan.

Frenchman, he seldom employs the whip or spur, but proceeds with the caution and circumspection of one who is determined to keep his seat. This may save him from temporary disgrace, indeed; yet he will never reach the goal of fame. But the restiveness of his animal, no doubt, deters him from the attempt—so he keeps a tight and steady hand, thinking he may, peradventure, get a fall.

In a word, and in the language of science, the *impulsive power* with the Hollander is but as one to a hundred—save and except in the prospect of gain.

TASTE.

AMSTERDAM.

THE taste of this people, in their theatrical entertainments, is rude and *grossier* in the extreme.* I mean with respect to those representations which, strictly

* In proof of this, and to show that I do not speak from prejudice, I shall extract a passage or two from a book, entitled "Guide des Voyageurs," and lately published at the Hague. (But this, let it be remembered, is the language of the last century.)

"Jean Vos était un vitrier qui aimait beaucoup à voir les spectacles. Poussé par son génie il entra dans la carrière, et composa une tragédie nommée *Aran et Titus*. On rôtit à petit feu, on pend, on étrangle, et on poignarde dans tout le cours de la pièce, qui finit enfin par la destruction de tous les personnages. Cette tragédie fut néanmoins extrêmement goutée, et ce succès le fortifia dans l'idée de ne suivre jamais d'autre règle que son imagination. Il disait qu'on doit mettre des bornes et non des entraves aux talens. Plein de ces merveilleuses maximes il fit paraître la tragédie *de Medée*, où les règles et le bon sens sont sacrifiés, aussi bien que les enfans de cette enchanteresse. Peu de temps après il fut fait directeur du spectacle d'Amsterdam, et dans cette qualité il exerça sur les auteurs une autorité despotique. Il ne souffrait au théâtre que des pièces inférieures aux siennes, et écartait soigneusement celles de ses rivaux. Ce poète ne cessa jusqu'à sa mort de faire des vers et des vitres."

speaking, can only be considered as their own: for, as to the performances which are under the immediate direction of the French or Italian players, they are truly polished and correct. The latter, however, are calculated solely for the judicious few; the former are the reigning mode.

It has been observed by the best writers, that we may judge of the refinement of a people, by attending to their scenical exhibitions; and I am truly sorry to observe, that a taste equally gross and indelicate with that of which I have just been speaking, prevails at present in the English theatre.* The French comedians of this city are really good performers; and I have received much pleasure by a frequent attendance at their theatre: but they labour under a considerable disadvantage, in playing to such a people as the Dutch, who, as Horace has observed of his countrymen, would rather be present at a prize-fight, or the baiting of a bear, than at the representation of the most elegant drama that could be offered to them.

* Witness the representation of the *Beggar's Opera*, with the characters reversed:—witness, also, the several farces which of late years have been brought forward at the Haymarket theatre.—*Note to the First Edition.*

In justice to a London audience, however, it must be acknowledged that the fault is principally in the manager. At the winter theatres, where the *elegant* is studied and preferred by the directors, it never fails of pleasing; and the conductor of a play-house should carefully keep in mind, that the stage has ever been regarded as a school in which the rising generation is to form itself; and that the virtues or vices of our citizens will depend in a great measure on the examples that may there be held out to them. But this is a matter which I shall consider at large in a future Essay.—*Note to the First Edition.*

FOPPERY.

AMSTERDAM.

"Non ex quovis ligno mercurius fit."—A Dutchman will never make a *petit-maître;* and yet he sometimes affects the character, after the example of the beaus of France. Amsterdam, however, is by no means the place for him, for as there——

The gilt chariot never marks the way,*

he has little opportunity of displaying his talent at elegant imitation; and, indeed, it is happy for him that he has not, for even at the Hague, and Utrecht, where he more frequently "puts on the fop," and where he might play the part with a better grace, he is very sure of losing by a comparison with his Gallic friends.

Why, then, my good gentleman, will you thus foolishly pursue a phantom?—Why will you thus endeavour, "in spite of nature and your stars," to be considered as a character, which, even admitting that you were to gain your point, could do you no kind of honour?

But such is the nature of man: ever aiming at something which is absolutely beyond his reach, and despising the greater advantages, because they are, possibly, to be attained with ease!

The Dutch, however, have as little of this absurdity as any people upon earth; and the weakness I have just reproached them with, is certainly confined to very few.

* Amsterdam being built on piles, the use of wheel carriages is forbidden in that city.

PRUDERY.

AMSTERDAM.

"For Heaven's sake, my dear Monsieur de M——," said I, on quitting a company of Dutch people, to whom we had lately been introduced, "let us not again be seen in such a circle"——

The women (whom I could always wish to praise) were the arrantest prudes in nature. Now, I have an unconquerable aversion to a prude; and am even apt to think a little hardly of her: for it is with modesty as with religiousness—too great a show of it will make its truth suspected and questioned by many. As he who is constantly vamping up his ware as the best, will lead us to examine the workmanship more minutely than that of his neighbour, who exposes his as it is, and says nothing.

I reverence the sex; but as I do not happen to be of the number of those complaisant gentlemen, who are ready to say of every woman they know,

> You have no faults, or I no faults can spy:
> You are all beauty, or all blindness I—

I may sometimes speak of the ladies with freedom: though I must, at the same time, assure them, that it arises not from any thing like ill-nature, but, on the contrary, from a truly ardent desire of finding them lovely in manners as in face.

Having touched on the subject of prudery, I cannot help observing, that there is somewhat too much of it in the behaviour of my pretty countrywomen: but being particularly enchanted with the vivacity and elegant carriage of the Parisian ladies, I may possibly view our females with rather too severe an eye.

MAN OF THE WORLD.

AMSTERDAM.

No man is more at fault, I believe, in making a bargain than I am. There is so much required in it of what the world calls cunning and acuteness, that I am generally over-reached. I cannot stand higgling. 'Tis telling a man, in my opinion (however indirectly), that you consider him as a rascal, and that you are prepared to counteract his knavery. Now, this is extremely painful to me; so I usually give the sum which may be at first demanded, and am, consequently, frequently imposed on.

The art of money-getting is successfully practised by the Dutch: they are, undoubtedly, adepts in it, and willingly run the hazard of sacrificing their reputation to their interest. With the eyes of Argus, it would have been impossible to have guarded myself against their attacks—with the tongue of Thersites, it would be impossible to recount the artifices that were attempted to be played against me: in a word, the Hollander is a match for the Chinese. In saying this, I advert to the grosser impositions to which a stranger is subject in Holland; not to the little frauds, &c. which are so common to every country, and which are pretty generally practised on the traveller of every denomination.

What I here set down, however, must be understood of their transactions with foreigners: among themselves there is much of probity and fairness in their dealings. But even here, if a Dutchman has a favourable opportunity of tricking, he cannot resist it for his soul. He is like the tailor who is so much in the habit of pilfering the cloth of his customers, that he cannot resist taking a portion of his own coat, if he even makes it too little by the theft. In fine, he is thoroughly a man of the world.

PHILANTHROPY.

AMSTERDAM.

LET it be remembered, however, that though a love of money is the *primum mobile* with the Hollander, it hardens not his heart. The necessitous will never sue to him in vain.*

This feature in his portrait is particularly striking and engaging; and in some sort reconciles us to the several asperities and hardnesses which we cannot but discover in its general contour.

Is it in language to describe the happiness of the truly benevolent man? I dare not venture on the essay. But methinks I can easily figure to myself the man who has shut his ears against the cries of the unfortunate: the cries of his relations and friends! Restless thoughts are ever attendant on him; he is equally unhappy at his board and bed. Sleep, which other men may hail as "Nature's sweet restorer," is to him a source of new inquietudes and fears. He rises, and his own reflections pursue him still. He trembles, but continues his course——

—Give me, O ye Powers which touch and warm the heart of man!—give me but that fair nymph Charity for my companion, and I have nothing more to ask: for well am I persuaded that every virtue is in her train.

* "Nous voyons," says M. le Baron de Montesquieu, "que dans la Hollande on n'est affecté que de l'esprit de commerce, on trafique de toutes les actions humaines, et de toutes les vertus morales: les plus petites choses, celles que l'humanité demande, s'y font ou s'y donnent pour de l'argent."

This assertion of M. de Montesquieu is highly illiberal and unjust: it is actually degrading the Hollander below the condition of man.

VERACITY.

AMSTERDAM.

I HAVE some little fear that the reader, on perusing the two or three chapters immediately preceding this, will be of opinion that I am too much on the *qui vive* with the Hollander:—that I have made my drawing of him in the *camera:*—and that being prejudiced in favour of my countrymen, I am unable to speak with impartiality of the people in question. But I do assure him that he is mistaken; and that I look upon veracity to be of the highest importance in a narrative. *Amicus Plato* (to render the sentence somewhat in the manner of Mr. Walter Shandy) *amicus Plato:* an ENGLISHMAN is my cousin—*Sed magis amica veritas:* but TRUTH is my mother.

There are several inconveniences attending travel; but I am fully persuaded, notwithstanding any thing that Mr. Locke, or other moral philosophers, may have advanced to the contrary, that it is highly beneficial to man.—But then, the person making choice of it must be of good and liberal education, or it will have a totally different effect.

—As to the little misadventures and *mauvais tours* which a man is almost sure of experiencing, during his foreign sojourn, they give me no particular uneasiness. I consider them as taxes which the traveller is under a necessity of paying; and therefore bear them, as all taxes should be borne, with patience and resignation.

POLITICAL VIRTUE.

AMSTERDAM.

MACHIAVEL is of opinion, that it is highly politic in a prince to put on every appearance of virtue; but that he will be utterly ruined, if he ever admits it in reality to a place in his breast. And it is a melancholy reflection, that there is so much of disloyalty and injustice in the world, as in a great measure to justify the Italian for having laid down a principle so seemingly inimical to the rights of men.

The more virtuous the prince, the less is he respected by his people: of which the stadtholder is a glaring proof. *Concordia res parvæ crescunt* is the motto chosen by the States; and this the Hollander, if we may judge from his present conduct and behaviour, is thus inclined to understand—"by anarchy and confusion little men may become great." But let him look in Sallust for the concluding part of the sentence, and carefully consider the whole.

Let him remember too, that a prince will ever bear in mind the political maxim of *necessitas jus dabit;* and that when particularly injured, he may possibly employ it to the advantage of himself.

THE ENGLISHMAN.

AMSTERDAM.

IT has been said by our writers, that "Englishmen do not travel to see Englishmen."—To observe them on the continent, however, one would imagine they travelled with no other view:—they form themselves into

little knots and circles, wholly regardless of the people whom, it might be supposed, they came to visit.

—Now it is from this extreme singularity, that an Englishman is so seldom approved by foreigners. Add to this, that out of his own island, he generally assumes to himself an amazing deal of consequence:—so that what my countrymen have hitherto considered as a compliment—*videlicet*—the being usually styled by Frenchmen "*Milords Anglois*," I look upon to be altogether ironical, and merely a term of reproach; thereby signifying, that they carry themselves with as much *hauteur* and *fierté* as the proudest peers in the realm.

Walking along the Warmoes street, I met my old acquaintance *Simplicius*. He was so greatly rejoiced at seeing me, that it was impossible to shake him off. After a little conversation, I found that he had been sent to Amsterdam by his waggish companions, in order to *drink the waters*. Poor fellow! he knew no more of Amsterdam than he did of the land of the Anthropophagi, and he was actually employed in going about a city built on piles, inquiring for its medicinal springs.

—This, by the way, may serve as a memento to travellers, to inform themselves a little about the places they mean to visit, previous to proceeding on their journey. What, for instance, would be our idea of the man, who, on reading the history of ancient Rome, should set out for that country, in expectation of finding it in the same state and splendour in which it is described by the Roman historians?—We should certainly laugh at him; and such was the fate of Simplicius.

EDUCATION.

AMSTERDAM.

'Tis Education forms the common mind:
Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclin'd.

And in Holland the twig is generally bent in one and the same manner. In other words, the plan of education in that country is nearly similar to what it was a century ago. The people are fond of appearing erudite, but have very little idea of the elegant in literature—and Burgersdicius* still prevails.

Here—

The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read,
With heaps of learned lumber in his head,

is no uncommon character, any more than in England. And there is very little chance, I believe, of seeing a different kind of men among ourselves, until accurate reasoning and sound philosophy shall take place of the jargon and gallimatia of our colleges and public schools.†

* Author of some philosophical pieces, greatly esteemed by the Dutch.

† "Je n'envisage pas (says J. J. Rousseau) comme une institution publique ces *risibles* établissemens qu'on appelle Colléges. Il y a, cependant, dans l'académie de Genève et dans l'université de Paris des professeurs que j'aime, que j'estime beaucoup, et que je crois très capables de bien instruire la jeunesse, s'ils n'étaient forcés de suivre l'usage établi. J'exhorte l'un d'entr'eux à publier le projet de réforme qu'il a conçu. L'on sera peut-être enfin tenté de guérir le mal, en voyant qu'il n'est pas sans remède."

The hints here given to professors in foreign universities may not be undeserving the attention of those of our own.

POLICE.

AMSTERDAM.

The police of Amsterdam is, I believe (1772), superior to that of any city in Europe: every inhabitant is in perfect safety. Now, this to an author who carries his fortune in his pocket is no trifling consideration and advantage. Here then I am secure: here do I wander at pleasure, and without the smallest danger of having my slender and poetical purse at any time seized on by the hand of rapine.

How are we to account for the remarkable fact, that in the space of half a dozen years not half a dozen of men have suffered death in Amsterdam; and that not even a beggar is to be seen in the streets? Is this to be attributed to the wholesomeness of the laws—the activity of the magistrates—or to the general spirit of industry that prevails among the people? In some degree to each, I think; but principally to the former.

* * * * *

— There is little of Dutch cleanliness to be observed in Amsterdam. The large population of the city, indeed, in a great degree forbids it: add to this, that a considerable number of Frenchmen have taken up their residence in the place, whose slovenly habits the Amsterdamers have insensibly adopted.

THE ADIEU.

AMSTERDAM.

I here bid adieu to the artificial city of Amsterdam, and in a little time I shall have done entirely with Holland; a country in which, as Sir William Temple

observes, a man would rather choose to travel than to live; where there is more sense than wit, and more persons to esteem than to love.

All things considered, however, it is perhaps a spot in which the Englishman will find himself more *at home* than in any other part of Europe, Switzerland only excepted:—and this is principally occasioned by the bluntness and sincerity of the people, who, in that particular, very nearly resemble himself.

* * * * *

I was pleased with the thought of returning home; but then I must leave my companions, Messieurs de C—— and M——. This was a painful moment to me, and I experienced something like the emotion when once, O Julia! I was under the necessity of quitting thee, for that eternity in the lover's calendar—a year: and when unable to bid thee adieu with my lips, I contented myself with tenderly pressing thy hand and dropping on it the speaking tear!—Yes, something like this did I experience, at parting from these my friends. Be not offended, fair one; nor deem this apostasy in me; but remember that the heart which is capable of friendship, is the more susceptible of love.

* * * * *

Farewell, then, a long farewell to the Netherlands! And now let me recommend to you, my dear countrymen, when you mean to visit Holland—to bring with you (among other necessaries) the whole of your philosophy and good humour. They will certainly be put to the test: though I must honestly acknowledge, that during the whole of my travels, I never met with a Dutchman of so very faulty a character as the one described by Swift, in his voyage to Laputa.

LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT,

IN 1792,

FOR RAISING SIX MILLIONS STERLING,

AND FOR

EMPLOYING THAT SUM IN LOANS TO NECESSITOUS AND INDUSTRIOUS PERSONS.

The love of Nature unconfin'd, and chief
Of human race: the large ambitious wish
To make them blest.

THOMSON.

THIRD EDITION.

LETTER, &c.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

Ever solicitous for the welfare of my fellow-citizens, and firmly persuaded that in promoting their interests I was contributing to the happiness of my Sovereign, (the first and most virtuous among men) I lately did myself the honour of laying before the minister (Mr. Pitt) a plan for the relief of necessitous and industrious persons, by a capitation or *poll-tax:* which tax was to be imposed on the affluent and prosperous in proportion to their respective incomes or situations in life. I must here beg leave to observe that it was proposed not only from a principle of *humanity*, but of *policy;* yet, as our rulers, by reason of the present state of affairs in a neighbouring country, appear to be averse to advance the interests of the community at large, in the belief that with an increase of fortune they must necessarily increase in power—in other words, that on finding themselves *easy* they would consequently become *factious*—I shall endeavour to show, by some few, but I hope not contemptible, arguments, that the fears which have been manifested on the occasion are groundless; and that the very reverse of what is apprehended would assuredly be the effect of an adoption of my scheme.

The levelling principles held out by Paine and his abettors, have contributed not a little to awaken the

fears alluded to. When I talked, in my letter to Mr. Pitt, of the too great inequality among the people of England, it was evidently from a so totally different motive, with a view so diametrically opposite to that of the quondam secretary to the American congress, that I cannot but express my surprise (commended as the plan has been by those who have investigated it throughout) that no one has yet stood forward and become its advocate with the existing powers. As the present publication may possibly fall into the hands of many who had not an opportunity of considering the plan originally suggested by me in my Letter to the Right Honourable Gentleman whose attention I had solicited in the matter, I shall take the liberty of again submitting it to the consideration of the public. In doing this, the clearer way will be, in my opinion, to reprint the pamphlet in question exactly as it at first appeared (especially as the impression is entirely sold off,) and afterwards to subjoin to it such further reasons for carrying the aforesaid scheme into execution as may since have presented themselves to my mind. The Letter to the Minister is as follows:—

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM PITT.

SIR,

IT was the opinion of Lycurgus, that "the two extremes of great wealth and great indigence are the source of infinite mischiefs in a free State." Such being the condition of the inhabitants of Sparta,* that eminent lawgiver, as you remember, in order to banish arrogance and envy from the Commonwealth to which he belonged, persuaded the people to reduce the entire country to a

* The words of Plutarch are as follow:—"There was a very strange inequality among the inhabitants of Sparta, so that the city was overcharged with a multitude of necessitous persons, while the lands and money were engrossed by a few."

common stock, to consent to a new division of the land, and to *dwell together in perfect equality*. The Saturnian times of Sparta are not to be revived at the present day.

Still, however, there is manifestly too great an inequality among the people of England. As it is my intention, in the course of the following pages, to point out a means of removing, in some sort, that inequality; of eradicating that most fatal of all State-distempers, *too great a degree of poverty among any particular and useful orders of men*, and at the same time with evident advantage to all parties; I shall unquestionably be listened to with that attention which the importance of the subject demands.

It is a well-known fact, that the middling or trading class of people constitute the riches of a State. The Plan, Sir, which I have now the honour of laying before you, is not designed to extend to the sick and aged among the *Poor*, properly and commonly so denominated, for whom sufficient provision is already made,* (and to whom, under proper regulations, it is at all times to be continued,) but to those persons who, from want of success in any business in which they may have been engaged, and who, from being entirely destitute of friends, or, at least, of any in a condition to assist them, are reduced to a state of penury and distress.—Without further preamble, then, I propose that the sum of Six Millions Sterling be raised by a Capitation, or *Poll-Tax*, as it is usually termed; and this to be imposed on such persons, and in such proportion, as the wisdom of Parliament may determine. I must here take occasion to observe, that it must not be objected to the tax in question, that it is an unpopular one. In the present case, and for the purposes for which it is imposed, it will be wholly and totally the reverse. But this will fully and

* The plan which is here proposed, goes to the reducing of the Poor Rates at least one-third of the present amount. *Workhouses*, and the like institutions, so far from being what they pretend to be, are often found to be nurseries for idleness and vice.—*Note to the First Edition.*

particularly appear in the sequel. The money thus raised, or the greater part of it, is to be lent out to necessitous and industrious people: part bearing interest at three per cent. and part without interest (according to the Plan herein stated) returnable in case of their success in any business or engagement whatever. The whole to be under the management of a certain number of persons appointed by Parliament, and who, in a Committee, are to have a discretionary power of advancing money to such as may apply for the use of it, according to the state and condition of the parties, and from the representation which may be made of them, by any person or persons of good and honourable character. The expediency and usefulness of such a plan is sufficiently obvious. It would be a considerable incitement to industry, and consequently tend to populousness; on both of which, it must be remembered, conjointly taken, that the welfare of a state or kingdom will always depend. Many have been and are now induced to emigrate to foreign parts, by reason of the heavy and *general* taxes of the country—taxes, indeed, which the exigencies of the state have from time to time obliged its rulers to impose. The assistance here proposed to be given to the indigent would be a great alleviation of their miseries, and consequently encourage them to remain in their native land; a great and desirable object, as I have hinted above. Many too, it should be recollected, are languishing in prisons, and their families in the greatest distress, when, from the relief so easily to be given, they might become at once both useful and happy. Nay, it may be observed, even of those who carry on their respective trades or professions with apparent success, that a considerable number are under the necessity of taking up money at their outset in life, from usurers, and the like description of men. Thus, originally in a state of oppression, they are unable, perhaps, at any time, to realize a single shilling; but on the contrary, labour under an increasing, and ultimately destructive debt. Many of these, I

repeat, have actually *nothing to lose;* while a lesser number, with overgrown fortunes, are adding daily, and with an unjustifiable eagerness, to their store. Now, the danger to which, in such a state of things, a kingdom will be exposed in case of an insurrection among the commonalty, is apparent at the slightest glance. Indeed, we should ever bear in mind the evils which arose from a like disparity of fortune among the Romans, and guard against them with the nicest care. Of more recent and popular tumults, I at present forbear to speak.

So large a sum of money, as that which I propose to be raised, when thrown into the hands of tradesmen, manufacturers, and others, must necessarily be the means of giving employment to a great number of persons—I mean of the lower order, who would be engaged in the service of those who were indulged with loans, on account of their being unfortunate, but no way criminal.—From giving employment to those people, I say, our love of human nature would be shown in a particular degree, while our lives and properties would be in much greater safety than at present; for that a considerable number of those who are sentenced by our laws to death or transportation, are driven by necessity, and from want of honest engagements, to the "dreadful trade" of *robbery*, (to use a kind of catachresis,) is certain. The celebrated Beccaria has remarked, that "it is far better to devise means for the prevention of crimes, than to study in what manner we shall inflict a punishment for them." The truth and justness of this observation, no one, I believe, will dispute. But to my plan. It is proposed to employ the sum of six millions sterling, raised as already suggested, in the following manner:—

One million to remain in the hands of Government for and during the term of seven years.

Five millions to be lent to the public: four millions at three per cent. interest, to the higher sort, reduced by misfortunes—the sum to each person,

from one hundred pounds to five hundred. And one million to the lower but industrious class, without interest, in small sums; that is to say, from twenty to fifty pounds each.

To some a part of the money intended to be lent might at first be given, and then a further sum advanced, or not, according as their good or bad conduct shall appear to the committee, who may be assisted in their inquiries by persons to whom a yearly allowance may be given for their trouble.

The simple interest on one million, left seven years in the hands, and for the use, of Government, at three per cent. is . .	£210,000
The like interest on four millions lent to the public is	120,000
	£330,000

N.B. The above sum of one hundred and twenty thousand pounds is the interest on four millions for the first year only. This is to be secured for the benefit of the fund, by deducting from the several loans the three per cent. interest at the time of issuing the money.

Thus, at the end of seven years, there would be the sum of one million three hundred and thirty thousand pounds in hand, without reckoning the compound interest, and saying nothing in regard to the interest on the four millions during the six following years, or the probable returns on the five millions first lent out to the public, and which returns are to be added to the stock or fund. These returns to be employed in loans to the necessitous, on the same conditions as at first, during the aforesaid term of seven years. The one million, and the interest thereon, to remain, as already proposed, in the hands, and for the use of Government, during the same space of time. At the end of seven years, the

remaining principal and interest to be employed in perpetual loans, according to the pleasure of the committee. The tax to be then again imposed, *or not*, as necessity may require, and which may be known by the report of the committee, who are to lay before Parliament, from time to time, a state of their account with the public.

That the higher class, such as tradesmen, manufacturers, &c. will willingly pay, if successful, three per cent. interest on the money lent to them, cannot be doubted; or that they will, in the like case of profiting by their business, return the sum which may have been advanced to them, in order that others may be in the same manner assisted—especially, when it is stipulated, that such persons should, if any particular misfortune should afterwards attend them, be again entitled to relief; *that is*, on proving to the committee, that their failure was not from any misconduct in themselves, but from accidents which it was wholly impossible to foresee, or seeing them, to prevent.

It may be urged by some, perhaps, that the establishment in question is open to fraud and abuse, and that idle and profligate persons may squander the money which shall be advanced to them for their relief; so that neither principal nor interest will, at any time, come in to the fund. But this must, in a great measure, be done away, when it is remembered that *few* are to be assisted to the full amount of five hundred pounds, and *that* only in particular cases, such as the having an uncommonly large family, and the like; and that *scarcely any are to be relieved at all*, but such as are of fair and honourable character. To exclude the first-mentioned description of persons *entirely*, might possibly be thought unwise; because it is not unlikely that they might become sensible of their error, and amend. Such persons, as I have already said, might be relieved by a small sum at first, and afterwards farther assisted, if they may appear to be deserving of it. With respect to *losses*, there will certainly be many; and if those losses are put at one

million, or even two millions, during the long-mentioned term of seven years, there will still be a prodigious sum remaining to be employed, as the committee might see good, and in respect to the application which should be made to them for relief.

To speak of the lower orders of the people:—The superiority of this over other plans, which go to nothing further than the *employment* of the poor from day to day, is evident. It is superior, inasmuch as they who have a chance of making provision for their families by some establishment (for of this class of persons, married men alone are to be entitled to assistance), will exert themselves far more than in *labour*, which is to procure them merely a temporary, a *precarious kind of subsistence;* while they are, at the same time, subject, perhaps, to innumerable ills.

I just beg leave to remark, that the scheme in question is by no means of a wild or visionary nature; on the contrary, it is uncommonly easy and practicable. That the rich and powerful will cheerfully give their assistance, is beyond a doubt; while it is equally certain, that the middling, or trading class of the people, will unhesitatingly agree to it, since it is meant to establish a fund in perpetuity, and which is to afford relief to themselves and families, in cases of misfortune and distress.

Again, and in conclusion:—We may easily figure to ourselves the several advantages which would be derived to the nation at large from the plan which is here laid down. How very many are there (I speak of the middling class of people) who at the present moment are struggling with difficulties, from which they cannot possibly extricate themselves! How very many are there, likewise, who, with scientific heads, with abilities of various kinds, are yet unable, for want of a small sum of money, to carry into execution plans which would, perhaps, be highly advantageous not only to themselves, but ultimately to the state to which they belong!

Let us reflect for a moment on the condition of men of good and liberal education, but who are without the necessary means of support:—let us think on the pain, the mortification they must endure. "He," says a celebrated writer, "who is doubtful of a dinner, or trembling at a creditor, is little disposed to abstracted meditation or remote inquiries." Such, alas! is far too frequently the situation of worthy and ingenious men; and the world is a considerable loser thereby. These, perhaps, after many, but ineffectual efforts to obtain from their fellows that notice to which they feel themselves entitled, sink into a supineness, an apathy, highly prejudicial to the interests of themselves and families. Their "noble rage" is entirely repressed; the "genial current of their soul" is frozen! At length, despairing of any kind of succour (for where is the individual to be found who can answer to every demand which may be made on his generosity?) and worn out in body as well as mind, they silently drop into the all-levelling grave! Such, we may observe, is the fate of many; while others, with a keener sensibility, and roused to absolute madness, hurry into acts of suicide, "with all their imperfections on their heads!"

But it is time, Sir, to think of closing a letter, which, however, stands not, I hope, in need of apology. All I have now to contend for is, that the above specified sum of six millions sterling be forthwith raised, and applied, as nearly as possible, to the purposes already mentioned. Farther to insist on the excellency of the plan (which will, no doubt, receive improvement in your hands), or on the present and future advantages to be derived from it, both to the state and people, were evidently a waste of words. It is founded at once on principles of *humanity* and *political good.* Worthy men, therefore, and worthy citizens, who know that, *to afford support to the unfortunate part of the community, is to give security and happiness to the whole,* will readily embrace a scheme which has no other object in view. And I will venture

to predict, that the thanks and prayers of thousands, of very many thousands, will attend the minister who shall propose, and the Parliament who shall give it effect.

London, January 1, 1792.

Such is the plan proposed to the minister. The immediate and certain benefits which would arise from it to the unfortunate must be evident to all; while its remote, or probable advantages to the state, a very tyro in politics may easily and clearly foresee. In my first publication, therefore, I dwelt not circumstantially on any of those advantages, deeming it wholly unnecessary so to do. Now, however, I shall proceed to particularize some few of them, as the generality of mankind are apparently too much engaged, either by business or pleasure, to inquire into the *good*, which, as I have before observed, must infallibly result from the execution of my scheme. But to the subject:—It is proposed, in the foregoing letter, to reduce the poor-rates *one-third* of their present amount. This, perhaps, is somewhat more than the plan can compass: but should it reduce those rates *one-fourth* only, and which it certainly would do, it is, undoubtedly, deserving of attention. The poor-rates amount to three millions per annum, or twenty-one millions in the course of seven years. One-fourth of this rate taken off, the tax for raising six millions for the service of seven years, and which, at first sight, might be thought a burden, is, in fact, no burden at all. It leaves, at the same time, *one million* at the direction of government, for the aforesaid term of seven years, which must consequently enable the minister to relieve the labouring part of the community from taxes to the said amount, supposing the nation to be at peace. It should likewise be remembered, that while so large a sum as twenty-one millions is collected in the course of seven years for the use of the poor, it must indubitably encourage *idleness;* but that, if one-fourth of that rate is taken off (and which

would give the money required, and to be employed in loans for the term of seven years), it must, on the contrary, be an incitement to *honest industry*. Another thing to be considered is, that so much money being put in circulation on the terms proposed (three per cent. for the use of it), it must necessarily reduce the rate of interest at least *one per cent.*, and as necessarily raise the value of estates at least *four years* in the purchase. Thus a very considerable accession would be made to the landed property, not less than *eighty millions* sterling (reckoning with Lord Auckland, that the rents throughout England amount to twenty millions, and valuing estates at only twenty years' purchase). To set this matter in the clearest light:—The interest of money being five per cent.; a person lends four thousand pounds to bring him a profit of two hundred pounds per annum for the use of it; or, he will give four thousand pounds, or more, for an estate of the yearly rent of two hundred pounds.

Now, if the interest of money fall one per cent., he must lay down four thousand eight hundred pounds, in order to gain two hundred pounds per annum; while he must, for the like reason, give at least the same sum of four thousand eight hundred pounds, to purchase an estate of the before-mentioned annual rent.

It is evident, therefore, that the landed interest would gain at least eighty millions sterling by a reduction of one per cent. on the use of money; a reduction, which the sum I have proposed to be raised and employed in loans, would, without the smallest question, effect. To landowners in general, the measure in question is consequently of the highest importance. Men make so much of their money by *redeemable annuities*, &c. to the amount of ten, twelve, and even fifteen per cent., that estates are greatly lessened in value by it. The granting of annuities should be declared unlawful; or, if it be in any case allowed, that not less than twelve years' purchase be given to the grantor. This will give the lender five per cent. for the use of his money, and pay,

at the same time, an assurance on the grantor's life, and which is requisite, when he (the grantor) cannot give security by pledges (I mean of movables, for the mortgaging of houses and land I consider as prejudicial to a very useful body of men, as I intend hereafter to show). When this last-mentioned security (*i. e.* pledges of moveables) can be given, the annuity which *now* is usually done at six, seven, or at most at the rate of eight years' purchase—a shameful imposition!—should always be done at the rate of twenty years' purchase. This likewise gives the lender five per cent. for his money—a sufficient interest; while, by reason of the property pledged, he is *secure*.

The landed gentlemen not being money-lenders, the reducing of the rate of interest cannot be hurtful to them; nor indeed can it be so to any, unless to usurers and extortioners—a set of men who ought to be universally reprobated. Nay, it is evident, that the landowners, though they should contribute largely in consequence of the proposed poll-tax, must yet be considerable gainers, since an abatement of one per cent. on the interest of money would, as already observed, increase every estate at least four years' value in the purchase.

As to the objection of money-jobbers and monopolists, they should by no means be listened to. *The good of the people is the first law.* This, a truly virtuous Minister—and such we have now to boast—will ever bear in mind; disdaining, as Shakspeare so finely expresses it, to be played upon by others as a pipe. He will consider, too, that he must be far more secure in his place, if peradventure *that* should be his object, by gaining the good-will and affection of the people at large, than by an attention to the interest either of *individuals* or *companies*, already abounding in riches, in order to gain their favour, and for purposes, which he is at the same time ashamed to own; purposes, however, with which almost all persons are pretty well acquainted, and on which it is consequently unnecessary at this time to

dwell. From the advantages already stated, he would always be sure to have the landed interest with him, and that is unquestionably the best.

If professed money-dealers are dissatisfied with the profit arising from the rate of interest proposed, and which even then must bring in considerable sums, let them give up that business entirely to *bankers*, turning their attention to commerce, to trade, and manufactures, of every kind. This would at once be the means of enriching the nation, while it would prevent the injuring of the thoughtless, by the purchase of annuities, &c. at an under value.

This common practice, pecuniary traffic, is infamous and ruinous to many. It can only serve to add to the riches of those who already abound. It is a monopoly of the worst kind. Those men, indeed, are the drones of a country, and should meet with no encouragement whatever. If considerable fortunes are to be gained, let the active, the industrious part of the community be the favoured, the protected persons—I mean the trader, the agriculturist, the manufacturer, &c., and if money is wanted by them to extend their several engagements or concerns, let care be taken that they have it at a fair and equitable rate.

A false kind of reasoning has gone abroad, that the sort of *usury* in question (for so I hesitate not to term it) is advantageous to the public, because, as it is urged, men are frequently unable to procure any money for their uses at five per cent., though they can get it at twelve or fifteen;—and that it is consequently better for them to pay the latter premiums, and which they do in the way of annuity on the sums they may be in want of, than to be ruined, as would possibly be the case, if they were hindered from raising the money at all.*

* A word or two from Montesquieu will not be improper here. "In order that trade may be successfully carried on, it is necessary that a price be fixed on the use of specie; but this price should be inconsiderable. If it be too high, the merchant, who sees that it will cost him more in interest

The argument is specious, but founded in error. The rate of annuities, like the interest of money, should, as I have already observed, be fixed by law. Should the plan I have proposed be adopted, the public will know where to find the sum they need; and if the stock should chance to be exhausted, a sufficient number of monied men will at all times be found, who will be willing to lend on just and reasonable terms. This, I say, they will unquestionably do, when proper security can be given, and when they become sensible that it will be *impossible to get more than a legal price.** If they complain of this as a *hardship*, I am of opinion that we should laugh them to scorn. What right have our usurers to complain, while they are considerable gainers, and without the labour and hazard to which the trader and manufacturer are subject in every case?

I have already observed, that the granting annuities, payable out of the rents of estates, and which are usually done at the rate of eight or ten years' purchase, should not, in any case, be allowed: and this I have said, as being highly prejudicial to farmers in general, the most useful body of men that the kingdom can produce. If landholders are in want of money, and which now is

than he can gain by commerce, will engage in nothing. If there is no consideration to be paid for the use of specie, nobody will lend it, and there, too, the merchant will undertake nothing. I am mistaken when I say nobody will lend; the affairs of society will ever make it necessary. Usury will be established, but with all the disorders with which it has been constantly attended."

* Cicero tells us that, in his time, interest at Rome was at 34 per cent. This evil was a consequence of the laws against usury. Laws excessively good are the source of excessive evils. The borrower found himself under the necessity of paying for the interest of the money, and for the danger the creditor underwent of suffering the penalty of the laws.—*Spirit of Laws.*

This evil, which Montesquieu is at a loss to obviate, (though he has observed before, and rightly, that it is proper to fix a price on the use of specie,) might be sufficiently guarded against by making the penalty on usury so very high, that the borrower could not possibly pay it. But as I have already said, with six millions newly put in circulation at three per cent., the interest of money must necessarily decrease. Usury would presently fall to the ground.

frequently the case, they had rather grant annuities secured on their several estates, than dispose of any part of them; and this, for no other reason than that they would be the nominal possessors of what had been left them by their fathers. The sum they required is thus obtained. This sum, in all probability, is presently squandered; another is raised in the same way, and then the tenants of the remaining part of the property are subject, at the expiration of their leases, to a rack-rent, which with difficulty they are able to pay.

If proprietors of land are in want of money, let them be obliged to dispose of a certain part of it. This will produce three times the sum that they could raise on it by granting annuities, while it would hinder them from oppressing the farmer; who, in such a case, may possibly be able to live without the necessity of borrowing, which he is now continually obliged to do. That our agriculturists, generally speaking, are deserving of particular attention, every thinking man, I believe, will allow.

But to set the matter in another light. It is clearly the *interest* of the landowner to suffer the husbandman to stand at an easy rent. He may then expect that his money will be paid to him at regular and stated times; to say nothing of the satisfaction which must arise to him from allowing a fellow-creature to *live;* from enabling the industrious farmer to support himself and family in a decent and comfortable manner. Besides, it should be remembered, that even in a pecuniary point of view, the raising of the value of estates by lowering the interest of money, will be far more than equivalent to any rack-rent whatever.

I must here take occasion to remark, that a scheme like the present, is not likely to be taken up by the merely *plodding statesman,** and who can with difficulty

* Such too was the opinion of a late elegant French writer, which I am induced to lay before the reader:—"Toute idée trop étrangère à notre manière de voir et de sentir, nous semble toujours ridicule. Le même projet qui, vaste et grand, paraîtra cependant d'une exécution facile au

be put out of the beaten track.* Or should he be made sensible of the advantages to be derived from it to the nation, he might, as it would take some little money, and immediately, from the rich, be yet unwilling to proceed in it from a fear of incurring their displeasure. This, however politic it may be thought by some, is merely the *policy of the moment*;† and he must be a shallow statesman, indeed, who does not perceive, that to support and encourage the trading, manufacturing, and agricultural part of the community, is at once his interest and his duty. For, though, to drain the middling class of people has hitherto been the principal object of the ministers of almost every country in Europe, they must, in a little time, be convinced, not only of the cruelty of the measure, but that it is really destructive of the very advantages they hope to gain.‡ It is

grand ministre, sera traité par un ministre ordinaire, de fou, d'insensé: et ce projet, pour me servir de la phrase usitée parmi les sots, sera renvoyé *à la république de Platon.* Voilà la raison pour laquelle, en certain pays, où les esprits sont peu capables de grandes entreprises, on croit couvrir un homme du plus grand ridicule, lorsqu'on dit de lui, *c'est un homme qui veut réformer l'état.* Ridicule que la nécessité d'une réforme fait, aux yeux des étrangers, retomber sur les moqueurs." Again, and touching our respective *duties.* "Le public ne connait, et n'estime que le mérite prouvé par les faits. A-t-il á juger des hommes de conditions différentes? Il demande au militaire, *Quelle victoire avez-vous remportée?* à l'homme en place, *Quel soulagement avez-vous apporté aux misères du peuple?* Au particulier, *Par quel ouvrage avez-vous éclairé l'humanité?* Qui n'a rien à répondre à ces questions, n'est connu, ni estimé du public."—*Helvétius, De l'Esprit.*

* It was observed to me by a celebrated literary character, immediately on the publication of my Letter to Mr. Pitt, that the plan laid down in it might well be styled a *noble one;* but that he feared there was not spirit enough in the then administration for it. He at the same time added, that were the great Earl of Chatham in being, he would, in all probability, carry it into execution.

† The *sang froid* of one of our *premiers* is remarkable. When questioned about the state of the country, and when its ruin was apprehended, he exclaimed, "Oh! it will last my time." An answer at once disgraceful to him as a *minister* and a *man.*

‡ The bulk of the people, and who, by the way, are really the sinews of a state, have been long held by the rich and powerful of most countries in the utmost degree of contempt. The effects of reproaching them with

extremely easy for those who are indulging themselves in every kind of luxury, to talk of the prosperity of the country. They urge it from the receipts of the Exchequer.* Nothing, however, can be more fallacious. A worse, or more absurd kind of reasoning cannot be made use of. At the present day, what numbers are to be seen who run into luxury and extravagance! This the meaner sort are enabled to support for a time, sometimes by borrowing, and not unfrequently by trick and chicane. But if the nation is so generally prosperous, why are there so many complaints? Why do we hear of poverty, of distresses among the trading and manufacturing part of the community? I insist, the reasoning of some of our politicians on the general prosperity of the nation is inconsequent and deceitful.

The fact is, that the wealth of the kingdom is great, but that it is, comparatively speaking, in the hands of a very few. But further:—Can that country be said to be prosperous which has so many *poor*, and for whom it is obliged to provide? Look to the astonishing number of beggars in our streets. Look to the *debtors* in our gaols. Are bankruptcies less numerous than in former days? Consider the number of persons whom the law condemns to death or transportation: and, after this, shall we talk of the prosperity of the country, or of the people? The largeness of the revenue, as I have before remarked, is nothing in proof of it, but the very reverse, if the general condition of the people be considered. But by the plan which I have laid down, and which I am so greatly

their *poverty*, as though that poverty were a crime, has been sufficiently seen in France. Those whom the affluent should have assisted, were styled by them *gueux*, *brigands*, &c. But they have felt, severely felt, the *impolicy* (to give it no other or harsher name) of first neglecting, and afterwards insulting, a *once* virtuous community, who wished originally for nothing more than to partake, in a small degree, of the ordinary comforts of life. It is true that the sanguinary proceedings of the French are in no sort to be defended. But this it is to exasperate an entire people; and such the fatal consequences arising from Louis's breach of faith!

* So early as the time of Trajan, his wife Plotina advised him to *prefer the interest of his people to that of his exchequer.*

desirous of seeing carried into execution, the very poor, to whom we now give such prodigious sums of money, and others who contribute nothing to the support of the State, would be enabled to bear a part in the national expense; since they, who are in tolerably easy circumstances, will assuredly indulge themselves in the *excised* commodities of the realm, and from which, by reason of their poverty, they had before been obliged to abstain. "One would almost imagine," said that able minister, Colbert, in a conversation with Louis Quatorze, when speaking of the wretchedness of the lower orders of the people in France, —"One would almost imagine that they deprive themselves of the necessaries of life in order to defraud your Majesty of your revenues." A gentle admonition, pointing out the civil and moral obligations of the prince towards his people: an admonition, by the way, which Louis was so far from being offended at, that he shortly after appointed Colbert superintendent and chief director of the trade and manufactures of France. I repeat, the industrious husbandman should be encouraged and protected. The waste lands of Great Britain are extensive, and ought to be considered in nearly the same point of view as the *conquered* lands* among the Romans. A grant of these wastes should be issued to a certain number of persons (with small sums of money from the fund), in order to their cultivation, and for the brooding and rearing of cattle, &c. This, in a little time, would lower the price of animal food, and, indeed, of all kinds of provisions, and which are now kept up by rich monopolizing graziers, &c. The benefit which would arise from this to the lower orders of the people must be great. Should it be objected that, from a greater number of persons being thus engaged in occupations which are now, perhaps, in the hands of a few, *those few*, by reason of the smaller demands which there would be for their several commodities, must necessarily sustain an injury; I answer, that the objection is by no means valid. For

* See Roman History for the *Lex agraria*.

instance, if the grazier and the farmer are obliged to sell at lower rates than they had heretofore done, and which reduces the price of provisions, the manufacturer and the trader, by a certain consequence, will lower the price of their goods and wares of every sort. This, I say, they must do, or there will presently be numbers to *undersell* them. All, by this means, will live in comfort, if not in affluence; while the lower orders, as I have already hinted, will be kept from starving: for, as the several branches of traffic will ever operate on and support each other, there will be no necessity for lowering the price of labour, the value of money remaining as before.

Another matter deserving of particular attention is, that convicts, instead of being sent to Botany-bay, at an enormous expense, might be kept at home, and employed on board fishing-busses stationed round the coast of England. Our sailors, too, who are seen in considerable numbers in the streets of London, and who are compelled by dire necessity to—

Beg bitter bread through realms their valour sav'd*—

might, in the same manner, be furnished with the means of support, by allowing them a trifling pay for their services, and keeping them in vessels entirely distinct from the convicts.†

The advantages which would be derived to the nation by this so easy improvement of our fisheries must be astonishingly great; while we are, at the same time, establishing a nursery for seamen, which would consequently render the unconstitutional mode of impressing no longer necessary in time of war. But still further, and "though last not least," let us think on the scholar without fortune—*the indigent gentleman.* Let us—I once more repeat and urge it—let us reflect on the

* Young.

† A political writer of ability has observed, that we have internal resources in this island, and in the due attention to the fisheries round it, to support at least one hundred times the number of inhabitants it contains.

mortifications to which the man of merit is exposed, who is in want of money: of the insults he is almost sure to receive from the wealthy, when suing to them for some little relief.* In saying this, I am, at the same time, perfectly sensible, that there are several among the affluent of truly noble and generous dispositions: but it is impossible that they should give assistance to all. I allude to the greater number who are rolling in riches, and who, from envy, malice, or at least, a base indifference, are only desirous of living for themselves.

What a miserable, what a wretched situation for the learned, the ingenious, and the virtuous! who are obliged to solicit aid from persons whom, while soliciting it, they cannot but despise. In sickness, perhaps, or if in health, unable to purchase the books which may be wanting to them, in order to complete the several performances they might have in hand, and from which they might derive to themselves at once both honour and profit.

In the name of the Father of mercies! let us then stretch forth our hands in support of the deserving of every class. Let us consider that in so doing we may probably, in the course of a little time, enable those very men, who are now in the greatest distress, to pour the balm of comfort into the wounds of the afflicted. Let us finally remember, too, that the philosophy both

* "En effet, soit que les hommes soient naturellement cruels, toutes les fois qu'ils peuvent l'être impunément, soit que les riches et les puissans regardent les misères d'autrui comme un reproche de leur bonheur, soit enfin qu'ils veulent se soustraire aux demandes importunes des malheureux; il est certain qu'ils maltraitent presque toujours le misérable. La moindre faute qu'il fait, est un prétexte suffisant pour lui réfuser tout secours: on veut que les malheureux soient parfaits. En un mot, la vue de l'infortuné fait, sur la plupart des hommes, l'effet de la tête de Meduse: à son aspect les cœurs se changent en rocher."—*De l'Esprit.*

"Pride, that plague of human nature, which does not measure happiness so much by its own conveniences, as by the miseries of others, and would not be satisfied with being a goddess, if none were left that were miserable over whom she might insult: and thinks its own happiness shines the brighter by comparing it with the misfortunes of other persons: that by so displaying its own wealth, those persons may feel their poverty the more sensibly."—*Sir Thomas More.*

of Aristotle and Plato (and it is the philosophy not so much of the head as of the heart) *considered wealth as a desirable blessing, and looked on poverty as an obstacle to the exercise of every virtue.*

Here is yet another matter which I would particularly recommend to the consideration of the world. Many of our young and beautiful women are driven by actual want into the most infamous courses of life. I therefore propose that the interest of the four millions lent to the public (which interest at three per cent. per annum amounts to a considerable sum) be set apart entirely for the use of destitute females; that is to say, that it be dealt out to them in marriage portions of fifty and one hundred pounds each, &c. But to place my plan or project in a *more political point of view*:—it is not the almost total abolition of taxes (as proposed by Paine) that can make a country great and flourishing, so as to withstand the efforts of its several enemies: it is the enabling the people to pay those taxes, that must effectually do it. By aiming at a *perfect equality*, a turbulent, democratical form of government would be established; which, indeed, and properly speaking, *is not a government*, but, as Plato has observed, a shop or warehouse of all sorts of governments. In a word, I am persuaded that an absolute levelling system is in no sort a wise expedient, or even *practicable*, unless for a moment. To attempt its establishment were positive madness; and to oppose it without affording some assistance to the people, were the same. The most advisable measure, therefore, that can be pursued is clearly that which I have pointed out. "The middle way is the safest." This, too, I will add, is the very time for the plan in question. Now, when the *Rights* of Man are so loudly insisted on: this attention, by gaining the affections of the middling class of the people, would be a greater security to the kingdom than hosts of soldiers in arms, while its prosperity would be certain; and if, at the same time, we convince the lower orders that we consider them as *men*,

we may be sure of their hearts. But this matter is so very ably set forth by M. Necker,* that I should beg leave to adduce his opinion in support of what I have advanced. The only question then is, whether *the few*, and those abounding, wallowing, as one may indignantly call it, in riches, shall yield to the *many*, who are evidently poor and distressed; or these to them, in order that they may the more indulge in luxury and extravagance of every kind? But let us yet hope that they will listen to the cries of the unfortunate which daily "go forth in the streets:" that they will stand forward, with the petty sums which are required from them, and hasten the beneficent act which I have proposed. If this they will not do; why, let them be told, that their *right*, their *power*, is but usurped; and that they may be in danger of feeling the distress, of which they at present make a jest. After all, I doubt not that there is still a considerable number of persons who, on hardly reading the title-page of the present pamphlet, will exclaim in warmth, "Do we not already contribute largely to the relief of necessitous people, and shall we be burthened further?"

This is, indeed, a very hasty and erroneous conclusion. The plan, as before observed, is to reduce the poor-rates at least one-third of what they at present stand at, and which I am firmly persuaded it would almost instantly effect. But were it even possible that the same sum should be required as before for the support of the poor, still there are many, very many indeed, who stand

* "A continual attention to the interests of the people, is of all obligations that which is most extensive in its operation; and this principle considered as a simple rule of conduct, would perhaps be sufficient to direct every measure of the Minister. In fact, it is not alone as being one of the most sacred duties of humanity, that I would recommend to the Minister of the finances, the protection of the people at large, and the defence of the poor in particular; but it is likewise because that solicitude is an efficacious mode of augmenting the prosperity and strength of a state."—*Administration of the Finance of France.*

M. Necker, however, has only in a general way recommended an attention to the interests of the people. He has laid down no particular plan for promoting those interests.

particularly in need of the assistance I am so greatly desirous of procuring to them—men who, from education, from former situations in life, high, perhaps, and flourishing, but reduced, some by unavoidable misfortunes, and some by the baseness of mankind—are unwilling, are *unable*, in short, by reason of a decent or becoming pride, that yet attends them in their fall, to accept the support which a *poor-house* might possibly give. These, I say, are the persons to whom, above all, I would afford relief.

I am thoroughly sensible, that very many arguments might yet be brought forward in favour of my scheme. I cannot but be of opinion, however, that I have said enough to the inhabitants of a "christian land."—"Power and fortune," says the admirable Plato, "must concur with justice and prudence, in order to accomplish any thing great and glorious in the management of public affairs."

To power and fortune, therefore—aided by the cardinal virtues which the Athenian sage has pointed out—I submit the matter contained in the foregoing pages; which originates entirely in the love which I bear to my country and my sovereign.

SATURNIAN TIMES:

OR,

THE ESTABLISHED RELIGION EXPLODED FOR THE HERO-WORSHIP OF OLD.

"Redeant Saturnia regna."

INSCRIBED, WITH BECOMING ADMIRATION,

TO THE ACCOMPLISHED HEATHENS OF THE BRITISH REALM.

ADDRESS.

THE following pages are thrown together with little order or method, and are to be considered as the outlines, only, of a plan projected chiefly for the good of the State. If, admiring my patriot-spirit, his Majesty's Ministers should be pleased to send for me (and I very humbly insinuate that I am to be found at my bookseller's every day about dinner-time), I shall certainly wait on them with the greatest pleasure. And when they have rewarded me with a "post of honour," *i. e.* a sinecure of a thousand a year—which may do to begin with—I will then lay before them the particulars of this my scheme; and ever after subscribe myself

Their much obliged,

Most obedient, and most faithful,

Humble servant,

A PROJECTOR.

SATURNIAN TIMES:

OR,

THE ESTABLISHED RELIGION EXPLODED FOR THE HERO-WORSHIP OF OLD.*

As this is an age in which our politicians are labouring to *reform* the State, and as it is the prevailing opinion that they will "most assuredly succeed in their endeavours,"—I thought I could not do a more acceptable service to the public, than by laying down a plan for a reformation of the abuses in the Church: or, in other words, for extirpating the established religion from his Majesty's dominions!

It is evident, however, from my title-page, that I would not, in throwing off the yoke of Christianity, deprive the British nation of all religious institutions whatever. The proposal of Mr. Thomas Taylor for reviving the Platonic system (the more especially as it embraces the notion of a *triad*), must, in case of the happy relinquishment of prejudices in regard to our present mode of faith, be received by us with becoming gratitude and thanks. This Marsilias Ficinas, as he has not unaptly been called, contends, and boldly, for the superiority of pagan rites over those of any class of

* Let not this title alarm or prejudice the reader—"'tis almost sixty years since" the paper was written as a mere satire against the "levellers" of that day. The author—it may be superfluous to add—is conscientiously attached to the religious establishment of his country.

believing Religionists that the world can produce. He has not forgotten that, at the synod of Florence, Gemistas Pletho predicted of mankind, "that they would one day renounce the religion both of the Gospel and the Koran, for that of the heathen;" and he nobly considers himself as the *fated agent* to bring about the mighty change. His labours have for their object the introduction of what may be called *Hero-worship*, and which the philosophers of France, at the commencement of the revolution there, were in hopes of effecting, and not unreasonably, by means of the ostentatious ceremonies of their Pantheon! It is likewise certain, that not only the Theurgists of the continent, but even those among ourselves, with Jenyns, if I mistake not, at their head, have been inclined to this worship, from their belief in the pre-existence of souls: a belief which was entertained generally by the ancient philosophers, and even by the poets, according to the mystical interpretation of some of their editors.

I must here take occasion to observe that the Miracles of Apollonius Tyanæus, with those of Plotinas, might well be adduced in aid of my scheme, were it not that they are sufficiently known; as well, indeed, as the many marvels of later date. With respect to Demonolatry, and of which the *illuminati* have been powerful promoters during the last fifty years, it will, no doubt, be adopted by my admirers with all its forms.

No one can hesitate for a moment, I think, on the feasibility and excellence of my plan, since it is maintained by Montesquieu, Voltaire, Condorcet, Gibbon, and other highly distinguished men, that the *decline* of literature, the arts, and indeed of knowledge in general, is entirely owing to the establishment of Christianity! Creeds, say they, which allow not of tolerance in any case, are irrational: "the exercise of reason is shut out from the breast."

As to the introduction at the present day of the Eleusinian and Bacchic mysteries in due form, it may

be urged by some, perhaps, that there is the less necessity for it, as the modern love-feasts so nearly resemble those rites. Amorous theology, indeed, or quietism, as it is sometimes, though not very correctly styled, and which appears to have been borrowed from Madame de Guion, is certainly highly engaging for the multitude; but still the disseminators of the tenets in question, though no doubt entitled to the name of fanatics, have no kind of pretension to that of *quietists*,—for it is a well-known fact that they are the most noisy and turbulent of men, and of course the very persons to whom I may look up for encouragement in what I so laudably propose.

Not doubting but that my intended project will meet with the approbation and encouragement of almost every order of men (I say almost, for excellent as it is, there will certainly be some to decry it), I shall, after some little preamble, proceed to show how far it may be of advantage both to the State and to the people; and also in what degree it may be likely to meet with censure and opposition.

It is acknowledged, I believe, by every one (the vulgar only excepted), that "religion is nothing but a name;"—"a bugbear to frighten children;"—"a state engine, fit only to be played off upon the common people," &c. &c.; and, consequently, that it is wholly unworthy the attention of every thinking* being in the universe!

But before I enter upon my subject at large, I shall attempt to delineate a character which is become extremely common in the world; and shall likewise venture to state my opinion as to the rank he may be entitled to hold in it.

The freethinker, or in other words, the truly fine

* "L'homme seul (says a celebrated French writer) est l'animal qui pense," &c. But whether the author means to exclude women from the thinking part of the creation, I will not take upon me to determine. I rather hope he does not.

gentleman* (for thanks to our mode of education, almost every gentleman is a contemner of religion), laughs at the formalities of our liturgies, and ridicules the dogmas of our clergy. At his outset, indeed, we find him somewhat timid and embarrassed in his manner:—"He will tell you, perhaps, that he is fearful of offending his Maker; that he stands in dread of eternal punishment; that he has been used to associate with fellows who go to church, and who say grace to their meat,"† &c. In a very little time, however, he assumes a totally different carriage; he dismisses all his weaknesses, he throws off all restraint, and having made an open and a manly profession of impiety, he presently finds himself surrounded by a band of steady and powerful friends.

Dare nobly, then!—

is the advice of the poet; and who can be said to dare more, than he who boldly defies the Deity, and loudly censures the wisdom of his laws? From so distinguished a personage, no one, I should imagine, will withhold the proper degree of praise, unless indeed it be some lean-witted Christian,‡ whom nobody knows, and whom it is certainly our business to despise.

In every polite and well-bred company in England, a clergyman is generally the standing jest—the whetstone, as we may say, of humour: for, though he cannot repeat with Falstaff, perhaps, that he "is witty himself," he may very safely say with him, that he "is the cause

* There is a very witty passage in Shakspeare, on which the learned Bishop Warburton has made the following remark:—"Shakspeare is but rarely guilty of such impious trash; and it is observable, that then he always puts that into the mouth of his fools, which is now grown the characteristic of the fine gentleman." This is rather ambiguously expressed, and should therefore be explained. The bishop undoubtedly means, that the fools of Shakspeare's time were fine gentlemen; and not, as some may be led to imagine, that the fine gentlemen of the present age are fools.

† Vanbrugh.

‡ "Sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has."—TWELFTH NIGHT.

of wit in other men." The very name of a parson, indeed, is sufficient to set the table in a roar.

> Great men may jest with saints: 'tis wit in them,
> But in the less, foul profanation. SHAKSPEARE.

It should by no means be forgotten, however, that there are two other species of merriment, which, when we have done with religion and its laws, may certainly be brought forward with the greatest success. These are the *double entendre*, and *ridicule of the sovereign*—or indeed any member of the royal family. This is very frequently done; and I must here beg leave to observe too, that both are introduced by your pleasant fellows with admirable propriety and effect, viz. the former in the society of the ladies, and the latter in that of the gentlemen.

These, undoubtedly, are fruitful subjects for the exercise of our wit and humour: so very fruitful indeed, that it has been thought a difficult matter to determine which of the three we should the rather prefer, or even which of them is the most likely, supposing our election to be made, to redound to our credit and advantage.

That the two latter topics, however, are capital auxiliaries in a dearth of the former, no one, I suppose, will deny. But as in all our disputes and controversies, we are said to derive the greater honour in proportion to the greatness and power of our adversary; so our opposition to the Deity, I should imagine, must place us among the foremost in the lists of fame. Taking this for granted, I shall next revert to the lesser matters which have been already slightly touched on, and, first, of the *double entendre*.

To put a modest woman to the blush, is the study and practice of a "pretty fellow;" and when we reflect on the motives by which he is actuated, we must assuredly give him our applause.

A suffusion on the cheek of beauty considerably heightens and improves its effect.—This the pretty

fellow knows, and being a connoisseur in beauty, he wishes to see it in its meridian splendour: he knows too, that indelicacy not unfrequently passes for wit, and very wisely considers, that by employing it at a proper season, his judgment, as well as his abilities, will be the more fully and clearly exhibited.

This kind of conversation, however, is not confined to any particular class of men. The father engages in it in the presence of his daughter, and the husband in the company of his wife. Precise and formal people, indeed, are offended at this, and repeat with the Roman satirist—

Hic nullus verbis pudor, aut reverentia mensæ, &c.

They are continually telling us too, that "virtue is its own reward;" that "vice to be hated, needs but to be seen," &c. &c. Virtue its own reward?—Poor creatures, we reply, have you entirely lost your senses? Hasten then to the woods and wilds—

Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings,—

for ye are not fit for the society of men of fashion.

The next thing to be considered is the truly diverting practice of "throwing ridicule upon the sovereign:" a practice, which, as it is pretty generally adopted, so it cannot but be highly approved.

Two very powerful passions (emulation and envy) are found to reside in the human breast. These, I know, are frequently mistaken for each other; but, in my opinion, they are wholly dissimilar and unlike. Spurred on by emulation, for example, we boldly aim at excellence, and not unfrequently attain to it: disappointed in this, we are then goaded and stung by envy, and endeavour to bring down excellence to a level with ourselves. In a word, their discriminating features are easily seen.

Now as it is altogether impossible that we should ever

arrive at kingly power and greatness, nothing better remains for us than to lessen majesty in the eyes of the people, and to degrade it as much as we can.*

It is asserted by some of our writers, that the present age is an atheistical one; but I can by no means subscribe to the opinion; for if the existence of a Deity be not acknowledged, what opportunity has the metaphysician for displaying his abilities; the Socinian for engaging in controversy; or the libertine for disseminating his satire? No, the reigning belief is deism:—but I will here give the outline of three common characters which are to be found in this, our sublunary world, so that the reader may be enabled to form an opinion of them; namely, the bold and daring Atheist, the half-believing Deist, and the pusillanimous Christian. To begin with the Christian.

A Christian, *i. e.* a weak and credulous man,—is a compound of humility, piety, and other antediluvian virtues. He remembers the Scripture admonition, "Do unto all men as ye would they should do unto you," and therefore conducts himself according to the severest principles both of religion and morality.†

He considers virtue as the sovereign good, and thinks that to relieve the necessities of his fellow-creatures, must be pleasing in the sight of the heavenly Master whom he professes to serve: for this he is sometimes pitied, and sometimes ridiculed, by the man of spirit, who uses very many endeavours to

Uproot th' old woman from his trembling heart.

But alas! every effort to reclaim such a man has hitherto

* "Since we cannot attain to greatness (says Montaigne), let us have our revenge by railing at it."

† We are told by Bishop Burnet, that the fanatics of his time professed themselves to be "above morality," which, as appears by some of their writings, was numbered among the beggarly virtues. But in this particular, what are the fanatical times when compared with ours? At the present day it may surely be asserted, that we are almost all above morality: for were that unfortunate creature to be found by accident in our streets, and perishing, there is no pretty gentleman to be met with, I presume, who would soil his fingers in raising her from the ground.

been ineffectual. He obstinately lives and dies a Christian.

A Deist, *i.e.* a man who rejects the doctrines of Christianity, and whose religion in consequence of it is very properly termed *natural*,—is made up entirely of inconsistencies. He acknowledges, indeed, the existence of an invisible Being, whom he represents as intelligent and good; but denies his interference in the affairs of men. Like to the atheist, he maintains, that nature is governed by general laws: laws, he says, which the sovereign mind has fixed, and to which it gives a free and uninterrupted course. Every event in human life is, therefore, by the deist, ascribed to natural causes, and the notion of a particular providence is considered by him as highly ridiculous and absurd. He will tell you, too, that his religion is founded in reason, and that philosophy is always ready to adopt its tenets—but then he will sarcastically observe, that profane reason is not to be set up against sacred mystery, and that if such an attempt be made, no punishment is great enough for the impiety.* Such are the principles of "genuine deism."†

An Atheist, *i.e.* a deep and subtle reasoner,—is a compound of incredulity, fatalism,‡ and other postdiluvian

* "L'église est infaillible: et les savans doivent se taire quand l'église parle."—*Voltaire.*

† "As the good, the great, the sublime, the ravishing, are found eminently in the genuine principles of theism, it may be expected, from the analogy of nature, that the base, the absurd, the mean, the terrifying will be discovered equally in religious fictions and chimeras."—*Hume.*

‡ "La fatalité est l'ordre éternel, immuable, nécessaire, établi dans la nature, ou la liaison indispensable des causes qui agissent avec les effets qu'elles opèrent. D'après cette ordre, les corps pesants tombent, les corps légers s'élèvent, les matières analogues s'attirent, les contraires se repoussent; les hommes se mettent en société, se modifient les uns les autres, deviennent bons ou méchans, se rendent mutuellement heureux ou malheureux, s'aiment ou se haïssent nécessairement d'après la manière dont ils agissent les uns sur les autres. D'où l'on voit que la nécessité qui règle les mouvemens du monde physique, règle aussi tous ceux du monde moral, où tout est par conséquent soumis à la fatalité. En parcourant à notre insu, et souvent malgré nous, la route que la nature nous a tracée, nous ressemblons à des nageurs forcés de suivre le courant qui les emporte," &c. "Dans

excellencies. He acknowledges no invisible, no intelligent power; but conducts himself according to the principles of nature; whose laws he supposes invariable, and from whom he deduces the spirit and essence of all things. He is of opinion, that while he can rank among his fellow-creatures as a good husband, a good father, a good citizen, he has done his duty in this world—and he looks not for an hereafter! He knows, that failing in these particulars, he will be reprobated by those with whom he lives—he knows too, that if he transgress against the civil order of society, he is amenable to the laws of the land, which will not fail to punish him for his offences; and he is therefore an honest man.

In support of his doctrine the atheist will demand—"if an observance of the forms of devotion—which will ever be found to prevail among an ignorant and a credulous people—is to be set in competition with the practice of the moral and the social duties of life?" He will tell us it is impossible they should subsist together: that they are wholly incompatible: that religion can answer no other end than to make men miserable, to harden their hearts, and to drive the superstitious to despair.* He will never acknowledge that

By night the atheist half believes a God.

No, nothing can shake his resolution. He openly delivers his opinions; nor is he under the smallest appre-

"Dans une nature où tout est lié, il n'existe point d'effet sans cause; et dans le monde physique, aussi bien que dans le monde moral, tout ce qui arrive est une suite nécessaire de causes visibles ou cachées, qui sont forcées d'agir d'après leurs propres essences. Dans l'homme, la liberté n'est que la nécessité renfermée au-dedans de lui-même."—*Système de la Nature.*

* "Les opinions religieuses des hommes n'ont pour objet que de leur montrer la suprême félicité dans des illusions, pour lesquelles on allume leurs passions; et comme les fantômes qu'on leur présente, ne peuvent point être vus des mêmes yeux par tous ceux qui les contemplent, ils sont perpétuellement en dispute à leur sujet, ils se haïssent, ils se persécutent, et croyent souvent bien faire en commettant des crimes pour soutenir leurs opinions. C'est ainsi que la religion énivre les hommes dès l'enfance, de vanité, de fanatisme, et de fureurs s'ils ont l'imagination échauffée;

hension, in the present age, of meeting with the fate of Socrates or Vanini: on the contrary, his praise already ensured, he looks forward to an ample reward.

But the atheist will farther ask us, if Epicurus occasioned any commotion in Greece? If the writings of Lucretius stirred up the civil wars in Rome? If Hobbes was the cause of bloodshed? And lastly, if it was atheism that brought a king of England to the block?

Such is the atheist; who exultingly exclaims,—

> Thou, Nature, art my goddess! To thy law
> My services are bound.

'Tis thou—"Yes, 'tis she," continue his adversaries, "who has made you little better than a machine, who has nearly levelled you with the brute."

A smile of indignation is his reply. He thinks that scepticism and infidelity only can keep the mind in constant play, and render it particularly vigorous and strong.

* * * * *

Thus much premised, I will now enter more particularly into my plan for "abolishing Christianity:" a plan so admirable in its principle, and so sure of producing the happiest effects, that I should hope, a statue of bronze or Parian marble will be instantly erected in honour of my name.

To remove the prejudices of education is an herculean kind of labour, and in which few would willingly engage. The attempt, however, shall be mine; and though I am sensible that religious opinions, when once admitted to the human breast, are generally pretty deeply rooted there,—I speak of the lower orders of the people,—I

si au contraire ils sont flegmatiques et lâches, elle en fait des hommes inutiles à la société; s'ils ont de l'activité, elle en fait des frénétiques, souvent aussi cruels pour eux-mêmes, qu'incommodes pour les autres."—*Système de la Nature.*

shall nevertheless expect, by aid of time and perseverance, to eradicate such truly pernicious weeds.

The chief points to be considered then, in a scheme of this nature, are the very great advantage that it is likely to derive to the State, together with the comforts and conveniences that it will undoubtedly procure to the people.

Now, there is every reason to believe (the prejudices of education once removed) that those infatuated persons who have hitherto wasted their hours at church, would, in such a reformation of manners, be led to pass them more agreeably in taverns, to the very considerable benefit of his Majesty's customs and excise.*

In the eyes of him who stands up for liberty of conscience, who is an enemy to priestcraft, and who trembles at even the idea of persecution, churches and chapels must ever be offensive in the highest degree. I therefore humbly propose that they be immediately disposed of—not as has been formerly projected, by converting them into playhouses and exchanges, but by levelling them with the ground, and, with the materials of which they are composed, erecting a magnificent palace for the king.† I have some little fear, indeed, that this part of my project will be displeasing to the ladies in general, whom I would never willingly offend. "Pull down the churches!" say they, distractedly—"Was there ever such a horrid thought!" "Where then are we to find a place for assignations? Where then are we to make display of our taste in dress?—How, O how! shall we ever pass the tedious hours which Sunday is sure to

* These branches of the revenue having of late years suffered a very considerable decrease, will evince the necessity of adopting my plan. Sunday is always to be considered as a holiday;—and as a love of generous liquor will no longer be reckoned among our crimes, we may form a pretty tolerable estimate of the quantity of ale and spirits that will be swallowed on the Sabbath-day.

† His Majesty's loving subjects having determined on raising such an edifice; the expediency of the measure proposed, which will make a capital saving to the nation, must be generally felt and acknowledged.

bring? Cruel regulation, which will deprive us of the only amusement, cards excepted, which this unlucky* day affords."

These undoubtedly are evils; but the lesser evil is always to be preferred to the greater—and if, in extinguishing Christianity, the advantages are palpable and great, and if a law be actually passed for the better effecting it, no British female, I should hope, would ever murmur at the decree.

Yet think not, my fair countrywomen, that I would rob you of a single pleasure, had I not some ampler equivalent to substitute. If churches be once destroyed —and that not a vestige of them should remain, is particularly essential to my plan—balls, plays, operas, and all the delightful et-cætera of happier days, will then be as common, on the Sabbath, in England, as they are on the Continent, or as cards and dice after ——'s Sunday dinners.

The ladies will be pleased to consider, too, that when my scheme is once adopted, and when the established religion shall be no more, that they will necessarily get rid of many restraints. If, for example, the practice of swearing be pleasing in a Bobadil, why should it not be equally so in a Lindamira? In the days of good Queen Bess, indeed—who, by the way, was herself an elegant swearer—the character was not uncommon: but now, alas! there is scarcely a woman to be met with who will venture on a splendid oath; so many are her religious fears.

> Swear me, Kate, like a lady, as thou art,
> A good mouth-filling oath; and leave "in sooth;"
> And such protests to Sunday citizens.—*Hen. IV.* p. 1.

It is surely a mistaken notion, that swearing is so thoroughly a manly accomplishment, that it should be

* The Romans too, it may be remembered, had their *dies atri*, or "unlucky days;"—but whether Sunday was included in the number I cannot pretend to say.

prohibited to the weaker sex. In my opinion, it is to the full as agreeable in a woman as in a man. And as it is altogether impossible for the fine gentleman now a days to call for his coffee without a d—n, which we may presently be convinced of, by stepping into any public room in town,—no good reason can be given, I believe, why the lady of *ton* should not be equally emphatic in asking for her tea.

The spirit that would be given to our conversation by this truly attic refinement, is much more easily conceived than expressed. That to be denied the privilege alluded to, is considered by my fair countrywomen as a particular grievance, the following instances will sufficiently prove.

"O, you should by all means refrain from gaming," says the lady in the comedy, to her female friend, "you see how it makes the men swear and curse! and when a woman is thrown into the same passion—why"—"That's very true!"—returns her companion, "one is a little put to it, sometimes, not to make use of the same words to express it."—"O had I leave to curse!"—exclaims the tragedy heroine. Here, I say, our women directly tell us, that they think it a hardship to be hindered from cursing and swearing; and very plainly insinuate, that it is nothing but the prohibition in the decalogue which has so unfortunately sealed their lips.

It is remarked, indeed, by Young, in the character he has drawn of Thalestris, that—

> Now and then, to grace her eloquence,
> An oath supplied the vacancies of sense.

But Thalestris was a wonderful lady. She had shaken off the little prejudices of her sex, and very clearly manifested, that her soul was as masculine* as one could possibly wish. In a little time we may meet with many such.

* See a curious dissertation on the Sex of Souls: printed at Amsterdam, 1730.

I have some little reason to imagine, likewise, that the man of the world, as well as the ladies, will be tempted to oppose my scheme. He remembers to have read in the poets—

> —— Bear welcome in your eye,
> Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,
> But be the serpent under it.
>
> Away, and mock the times with fairest show,
> False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

Again—

> —— Treasure up my precept:
> The world's before thee—be a knave and prosper.
> For he who deals with mankind on the square,
> Is his own bubble, and undoes himself.

These he interprets literally: these he really considers as precepts. He will contend, that according to the above doctrine, religion is of very great *use* in the world: that, like to war, it should be regarded as a necessary evil,* and tolerated by every state.

I grant, indeed, that religion is of infinite service, when taken in the above point of view, and that they who go regularly three times a day to church, do not unfrequently carry on all their designs with impunity, and even without suspicion. In a word, they consider themselves as *privileged persons*, and practise every kind of fraud.†

* "Les idées fausses," says a celebrated writer, "que tant de personnes ont sur l'utilité de la religion, qu'ils jugent au moins propre à contenir le peuple, viennent elles-mêmes du préjugé funeste qu'il est des erreurs utiles, et que des vérités peuvent être dangéreuses. Ce principe est le plus propre à éterniser les malheurs de la terre. Quiconque aura le courage d'examiner les choses, reconnaîtra sans peine que tous les maux du genre humain sont dûs à ses erreurs, et que les erreurs religieuses doivent être les plus nuisibles de toutes, par l'importance qu'on y attache, par l'orgueil qu'elles inspirent aux souverains, par l'abjection qu'elles prescrivent aux sûjets, par les frénésies qu'elles excitent chez les peuples: on sera forcé d'en conclure que les erreurs sacrées des hommes sont celles dont l'intérêt des hommes exige la déstruction la plus complète, et que c'est principalement à les anéantir que la saine philosophie doit s'attacher."

† "It is unsafe to draw any certain inference in favour of a man's morals, from the fervour or strictness of his religious exercises, even though

Thwarted thus in his designs, and unable any longer to play the hypocrite, the man of the world will no doubt be loud in his complaints; but as the extinguishing of Christianity is the primary object of my pursuit, the man of the world must be left to chance. And as several proposals have been given to the public, in the view of putting a stop to the ravages of war, so I am of opinion that this my darling project will put an effectual period to all the miseries and inconveniences which the fashionable part of the community have so long complained of, and which have been occasioned entirely by religion and its laws.

There is a considerable number of people who are sticklers for a nominal religion, because they are very clearly of opinion, that it serves to keep the multitude in awe.* Let me, however, be perfectly understood. When I talk of an abolishment of Christianity, I mean, that every outward appearance of religion be banished from among us, so that our pleasures may be free and unconfined. But then it is not in the power of any act of parliament to hinder a man from being thoroughly a religionist *at heart;* and very staunch religionists the vulgar will probably long remain.

By way of consolation, however, to the aforesaid silly creatures, who (in concert with the fair sex, though from a very different motive) will no doubt be murmuring at the loss of their churches, the following scriptural passages may be adduced, by which it will be perceived

he himself believes them sincere..... Every prudent man is on his guard when he meets with any extraordinary appearance of religion," &c.
HUME'S *Natural History of Religion.*

* With submission to wiser judgments, however, I think this but a trifling objection to my scheme. The less civilized part of the community, or those who may be properly styled vagabonds, and who should by no means be considered with our labouring poor,—are certainly more in dread of temporal punishments, than they are of the justice and vengeance of Heaven. That we have "strict statutes and most *biting* laws," no one, I suppose, will deny; and it is pretty generally remarked too—but more especially by foreigners,—that we do not suffer those laws to "sleep."

that they are still at liberty to serve their Maker (if, after what has been said, they are really weak enough to think about it) "without the assistance of a parson," and "entirely in their own way."

"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward.—But when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."*

Now, what can better warrant my very laudable intention of putting down the clergy, demolishing the churches, and effectually destroying the trade of religion, (for no one I suppose will question my seriousness in the matter) than the above-quoted passage? Will not the freethinker immediately ask us, if they do not sufficiently proclaim the inefficacy and unacceptableness of public prayer? Will he not tell us, that in establishing churches, we "err and go astray with open eyes?"—Will he not remind us of the proverb, "The nearer the church, the farther from God?" Will he not say that we are priest-ridden?

That the lower orders of the people should continue to manifest a partiality for the christian religion, when from the conduct of their superiors they may perceive how very little it is held in account, has been thought extraordinary by many. But the poor and illiterate vulgar, it should be remembered, are for quietly jogging on to heaven—they pursue the beaten track—they never stop to make inquiries. In a word, they foolishly put up with things as they find them; and however astonishing it may appear to stronger minds, they actually look upon schism to be a crime, and consider the schismatic as an enemy to the State.——

* St. Matt. ch. v.

Is there, I would ask, on earth a more dreadful malady than madness; and is it not the ordinary attendant upon superstition? What can possibly be more distressing than—

> To see the noble and most sovereign reason,
> Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh.

Now, when the invincible, seraphic, and irrefragable doctors of the day have delivered their subtilized discourses on faith, grace, justification, &c. and when they have enveloped their doctrine in a cloud, which it is impossible for the keenest optics ever to penetrate, can we wonder that their followers, who vainly attempt it, should by a continual gazing become mad ?*—

—The fact is, the arguments of these mystical high-fliers—

> Directly tend
> Against the point they would defend.

All, in short, is mystery.† Yes, mystery is the star that has guided our fanatics to Bethlehem.‡ And whoever would enjoy the *mens sana in corpore sano*, must never listen to the voice of enthusiasm, bigotry, or error. But enough of these.—

After the very great diversion that the parson has always afforded us, and which I have very candidly acknowledged at the opening of this performance, we must feel some little regret in putting him down: but then it must be remembered, that in doing this, we shall no longer be subject to the *odium theologicum;* or, as it has been wittily translated, "theological impertinence," and to which we at present so tamely submit. Nor

* Why the following charges were given to us—"Be not righteous overmuch;" "neither make thyself overwise"—we may pretty easily guess; and when we recollect the speech of Festus to St. Paul, in which he said to him—"Paul, thou art beside thyself," we should also bear in mind what it was that had turned the Apostle's brain.

† "Where mystery begins religion ends," says an eminent divine.

‡ "Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared."

"And he sent them to Bethlehem," &c.—*Matt.* ii. 7, 8.

should it by any means be forgotten, that there is still a Deity to scoff at, whose justice and benevolence we may question and arraign: so that our politicians will have little to fear from the wits, who, I very readily grant, might otherwise be meddling in national affairs, and consequently prove extremely troublesome to our rulers and ministers of state.

To show, however, that I am no way singular in my opinions respecting our religion and its forms, I shall here beg leave to cite a respectable authority for what I have advanced—no other than the great and learned Erasmus: his words are these—

—"Now it is worthy of observation, that the christian religion seems to have a very near relation to folly, and not the smallest alliance with wisdom: of the truth whereof—if you desire somewhat more than my bare assertion—you may presently become sensible, by considering that women, children, old men and fools, led as it were by a secret impulse of nature, are always most regular in repairing to church, and most zealous, devout, and attentive in the performance of the several parts of divine service," &c.*

Such are the sentiments approved and adopted by the man whom the poet has very significantly styled—

The glory of the priesthood and the shame—

sentiments, which must, I think, when it is considered by how grave and venerable a personage they were originally delivered, sufficiently justify me in my undertaking; and, at the same time, serve as an answer to every cavil and objection that may be made to it.

That the religious character in general has at all times been considered as particularly mean and contemptible, the following quotations will show:—

"It is the women who excite the men to devotion and supplication, and the observance of religious days. We

* See the *Moriæ Encomium.*

rarely meet with any one living apart from the females, who is *addicted to such practices.*"—*Strabo.*

"They who undertake the most criminal and the most dangerous enterprises, are commonly the most irreligious."—*Diod. Sic.*

"The doctrines of the christian religion, which recommend only passive courage and suffering, have subdued the spirit of mankind, and fitted them for slavery and subjection."—*Machiavel.*

"Survey most nations and most ages. Examine the religious principles which have, in fact, prevailed in the world. You will scarcely be persuaded that they are other than sick men's dreams, or perhaps you will regard them more as the playsome whimsies of monkeys in human shape, than the serious dogmatical asseverations of a being who dignifies himself with the name of rational."

—"Most men are ambitious; but their ambition may commonly be satisfied by excelling in some particular profession, and thereby promoting the interests of society. The ambition of the clergy can often be satisfied only by promoting ignorance and superstition, and implicit faith and pious frauds: they must not, like the rest of the world, give scope to their natural movements and sentiments: they must set a guard over their looks, and words, and actions: and in order to support the veneration paid them by the ignorant vulgar, they must not only keep a remarkable reserve, but must promote the spirit of superstition by a continued grimace and hypocrisy."—*Hume.*

Timidity and irresolution have hindered us from throwing off the shackles under which the Church has so long obliged us to groan. We are apt, indeed, to boast of our liberty and freedom of speech, but when shall we meet with an honest fellow who can be compared with Mr. Broderic of Ireland?—of whom it is recorded by Swift, that he pulled the Bishop of Killalo by his lawn sleeve, and told him, in a bold and threatening manner,

that "he hoped to live to see the day, when there should not be one of his order in the kingdom." This was, in truth, an extraordinary man. This is the character I am in search of—this is the *reforming spirit* to which I might look up for encouragement and protection! and yet I almost despair.—But away with despair! it is the vice of little minds; and I may yet be fortunate enough to see the times, when there shall be—

> An harmonious inclination
> Of all degrees to *reformation:*
> And oyster-women lock their fish up,
> And trudge away to cry,—*No Bishop!*

Thus much set down, I shall now hasten towards a close, reserving my grander propositions *in petto*, until called upon by the powers that be—just remarking, however, by the way, that as in the opinion of the materialist, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is nothing but a metaphysical romance;* and as the more refined among my countrymen seem verging so fast towards materialiasm, I may very reasonably expect that the prevalence of such opinion will greatly promote and forward my design.

One thing I had nearly forgotten.—The revenues of my lords the bishops, together with those of the inferior clergy, may be sequestrated to the use of the State. The money will be acceptable enough, but what are we to do with the men? Botany Bay? No—the better plan will be to send them forthwith to America. Yes,

* "Ne soyons donc point surpris des hypothèses subtiles, aussi ingénieuses que peu satisfaisantes, auxquelles les préjugés théologiques ont forcé les plus profonds des spéculateurs modernes de recourir, toutes les fois qu'ils ont taché de concilier la spiritualité de l'âme avec l'action physique des êtres matériels sur cette substance incorporéelle, sa réaction sur ces êtres, son union avec le corps. L'esprit humain ne peut que s'égarer lorsque renonçant au témoignage de ses sens, il se laissera guider par l'enthousiasme et l'autorité. Enfin, si l'on veut se faire une idée des entraves que la théologie a donneés aux génies des philosophes chrétiens, l'on n'a qu'à lire les romans metaphysiques de Leibnitz, de Malbranche, de Cudworth," &c. &c.—*Système de la Nature.*

America is certainly the place for them—there they may be sure of finding friends, particularly the several prelates, who will be welcomed with acclamations, and received with open arms.

* * * * *

That the world will be divided in opinion with regard to my project, I can have very little doubt. Many will highly approve it, and be for granting me a handsome recompense; while others will as stoutly maintain that I should incontinently be sent to Bedlam. To prove, however, that I am sound of intellect, and that I really know what I am about, I do openly and honestly declare, that when my plan is once adopted, I shall be ready to receive, as the reward of my labours, such part of the SPOILS OF THE CHURCH as the Parliament of Great Britain, in its wisdom and goodness, shall be pleased to allot to me—a reward which I have every reason to believe will be proportioned to my services and merits, and which may probably exceed my fondest hopes.

END OF VOL. II.

LATELY, BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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SHAKSPEARE'S HIMSELF AGAIN;

OR,

THE LANGUAGE OF THE POET ASSERTED;

BEING

A FULL, BUT DISPASSIONATE, EXAMEN OF THE READINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE LATER EDITORS.

The whole comprised in a Series of Notes, FIFTEEN HUNDRED in Number, and farther illustrative of the more difficult passages in his Plays,—to the various Editions of which the present Volumes form a complete and necessary Supplement.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE world is in possession of so many excellent discourses respecting Shakspeare, that to insist on his merit at the present day were only to repeat the sentiments contained in them. But though the *general excellence* of the poet is admitted on all hands, his *particular expression* has (except in the instance of the editor Warburton) been very frequently misunderstood. This is a matter, however, which will best appear by an attentive perusal of the notes and observations which I have now the honour of submitting to the public opinion. The task was laborious, but pleasing: it originated in what may be termed adoration of a writer, perhaps the most distinguished that England can be said to boast; but who yet, and even like the monumental marble, has suffered considerable injury from length of time. But the injury is chiefly *discoloration;* the effigies of this terrestrial Jupiter, this maker, this creator, stand majestically firm. Something more, indeed, was requisite to its beauty than the mere removal of spot or stain: the chisel was to be occasionally used with boldness, but it was at the same time to be directed with care. Unhappily, however, this care is little seen.—But to speak more particularly, and at once to the point. The only way in which the later commentators attempt to *elucidate* Shakspeare, is by producing what they call parallel passages from the writers of the time; which passages, however, being *parallel* in nothing but a *word*, while the sense is entirely different, has led to the grossest, the most ridiculous mistakes: for it should ever be borne in mind, that to *illustrate* an author properly, the similarity must be found, not in the *word alone*, but in the *thought*. Now, it is from attending to little more than the former, that almost all the editors have failed in their examples, and that we have still so very many errors to correct. That they have been seemingly diligent, I must readily own; yet such kind of

diligence as that which is found in them darkens instead of illumining, so that we can with difficulty discover, "through the palpable obscure," our "uncouth way." Addison has well observed, that "in works of criticism, it is absolutely necessary to have a clear and logical head." In this he is incontrovertibly right. But here let me advert to the duty of the critic and the annotator, and which I conceive to be nearly as follows: To consider the word, which may be liable to challenge in his author, not only in respect to analogy, or as it may resemble in sound or appearance that which he proposes to substitute for it, but how far the one he has to offer will agree with the context; so that no explication, no interpretation whatever, may appear forced or arbitrarily brought in.

A very frivolous objection has been raised against the poet, namely, for the admission of words which may be considered as new. "Such," say the editors, "are not to be received; no example can be found of their use." But it should be remembered, that if words are employed by Shakspeare, of which the etymology is unknown; if there be among them such as philologers declare themselves unable to trace back to any ancient language whatever, but which seem to be entirely of the writer's formation; why may they not have their origin with Shakspeare as well as with another? Nay, the greater the genius of the author, the more likely will he be to venture on expressions at once novel and bold. It is from this very circumstance, from this very practice, and which has been so weakly and impoliticly censured, that both Homer and Milton have so greatly excelled in sublimity of style.—Thus much with respect to words which may properly be said to be *coined* by the poet. As to *French* and *Italian* expressions, he has used very many: he has, likewise, no inconsiderable number of words with a *Latin* sense; and which our grammarians and lexicographers, instead of cavilling at, would do well to adopt, since the English language is comparatively weak.

But it will here be necessary to consider,—and I shall do it as concisely as possible,—how far it may be permitted to bring *conjecture* in aid of the editor, and for the purpose of clearing up *obscurities* which may be said to lie in the poet's *fancy*, and which consequently can be effected in no other way. It has, indeed, been largely indulged in by Warburton, and hence his excellence as a critic and a commentator; hence the very high estimation in which he must ever be held by those who are possessed of a kindred spirit. He was truly the character depicted by the Roman orator, *Vir maxime limatus et subtilis*, equally judicious and acute. But this *conjectural criticism*, of which I shall presently say more, certain of the poet's editors will not by any means admit; nor, from the manner in which, as before observed, they attempt to elucidate him, am I in the least surprised at the objection. They who have looked to *verbal* mistakes alone, will necessarily exclaim against a mode of interpretation, which owes its superiority to strength of intellect; to an intimate acquaintance with the nature of man. I am clearly of the opinion of Johnson in the matter (though much more inclined, by the way, to such kind of criticism than himself), who has remarked that "there is no danger in conjecture, if proposed *as conjecture*." This, then, I have practised on every occasion, by confining my emendations entirely to the margin, where they may be suffered to remain until some future editor (who, let it be remembered, must be neither a Theobald nor a Steevens) shall determine on the *validity* of their claims.

It must not be imagined from what has gone before, that I declare against the *illustration* of an author by producing parallel passages from the works of his contemporaries, or from those of a not very distant age: I am sensible that this is frequently to be done, and with success:—all I contend for is, that it must be practised by well considering the context;

by an attention, as I have already remarked, not to the *word* alone, but to the *thought*. Above all, however, I will maintain, and boldly, that without the "daring conjecture," as Johnson has termed it, Shakspeare would ever remain particularly obscure; for as a *similarity of talent* is wanting in the writers of his time, it is in vain to search among them for a *similarity of sentiment or expression*. I yet repeat, that on ordinary occasions, and where (if it be permitted me so to talk) the poet is *nothing more than man*, such resemblance is often to be found: and if there be judgment to direct in the application, it will be well—the mode of explication may be adopted, I say, with success.

It is acknowledged, I believe, on all hands, that Johnson did little as a commentator on Shakspeare; that is to say, in giving clearness and consistency to the poet's expression; while the charge of a *want of morality* in his writings is much too hastily advanced. The critic observes of him —"He sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct, that he seems to write without any moral purpose." But it should be remembered, that if some things repugnant to our moral feelings be occasionally found in his pages, the poet is no way deserving of reprehension on that account. It is not himself, but the *character* who speaks. It is true, indeed, that the stage should be a school of morality: and it is on this principle—whatever the *formalist* may think on the matter —that the vicious are presented to our view:—it is not to excite us to imitation, but abhorrence, that they are produced on the scene. And who shall have the temerity to say, that the axiomatical sentences, the lessons in virtue, which are scattered through the dramas of Shakspeare, are not such as must inevitably arrest the attention of the good, and tend to the reformation of the bad! But the censure of the critic is not confined to this point alone. He is equally severe when speaking of him in the exercise of his art:—"Whenever he solicits his invention, or strains his faculties, the offspring of his throes is tumour, meanness, tediousness, and obscurity"—with much more to the like effect. Again we are told of one of his plays,—"To remark the folly of the fiction, the absurdity of the conduct, the confusion of the names and manners of different times, and the impossibility of the events in any system of life, were to waste criticism upon unresisting imbecility," &c. &c. This is a language by no means allowable in speaking of Shakspeare,—it is indeed far better suited to the meridian of Paris, than that of London. Beside, what are we to understand by "unresisting imbecility?" The expression is vague and indeterminate: it gives us nothing but an empty sound. But Johnson, on other occasions, is frequently more sonorous than solid. He says, for instance, that "the chief desire of him that comments an author, is to show how much other commentators have corrupted and obscured him." But this is stating the matter perversely. It is certain that a commentator who finds his author *obscure*, is desirous of noting it; or for what, it may be asked, has he taken up the pen? and it must be the same, if passages, by whatever means, are rendered *corrupt*. The fact is, not that he *has a desire* to show how much preceding annotators have mistaken the sense of the writer they have sat down to expound, but that his works *being corrupted*, the annotator *has a desire* to restore him to himself. It is true that in doing this, he exposes the blunders of those who have gone before: this, however, should not be attributed to choice or "*desire*," as the learned gentleman has called it, but to *necessity and the nature of things*.

I must further observe of this critic, who by the way has been much too highly panegyrized by his followers, that he is remarkably wanting in consistency. In one page, we find him objecting to a word by saying,

"It must not be admitted: there is no example of it." In another, "This expression I am forced to propose, without the support of any authority for it." If so, why may not the same be practised by other persons, and of other words?

With like inconsistency, and when speaking of the general merit of Shakspeare's performances, he observes: "The theatre, generally speaking, is peopled by such characters as were never seen, conversing in a language which was never heard, upon topics which will never arise in the commerce of mankind. But the dialogue of this author is often so evidently determined by the incident which produces it, and is pursued with so much ease and simplicity, that it seems scarcely to claim the merit of fiction, but to have been gleaned, by diligent selection, out of common conversation, and common occurrences:"—"this, therefore, is the praise of Shakspeare, that his drama is the mirror of life; that he who has mazed his imagination, in following the phantoms which other writers raise up before him, may here be cured of his delirious ecstasies, by reading human sentiments in human language, by scenes from which a hermit may estimate the transactions of the world, and a confessor predict the progress of the passions."—Again; "His comedy pleases by the thoughts and the language, and his tragedy, for the greater part, by incident and action: his tragedy seems to be skill, his comedy to be instinct. His comedy, indeed, often surpasses expectation or desire."—But how does this agree with what follows?—"In his comic scenes he is seldom successful when he engages his characters in reciprocations of smartness, and contests of sarcasm; their jests are commonly gross, and their pleasantry licentious; neither his gentlemen nor ladies have much delicacy, nor are sufficiently distinguished from his clowns by any appearance of refined manners."—"His declamations, or set speeches, are commonly cold and weak, when he endeavours, like other tragic writers, to catch opportunities of amplification: and instead of inquiring what the occasion demands, to show how much his stores of knowledge could supply, he seldom escapes without the pity or resentment of his reader." . . . . .

As to the employing of *conjecture* in the exposition of Shakspeare, I hold it absolutely indispensable, since, of those expressions which are evidently his own, there are very many which have acquired abstruseness from the lapse of years; while others are wholly unintelligible, either from the carelessness of the transcriber, the printer, or the error of the critic. It is not with the author, however, but with the latter, that the greater liberty is to be taken: it is with these that we can exercise our license without fear of reproof; and it is with these, indeed, that we have chiefly to do; here it is that the *difficulties* are principally found. In a word, and in fact, it is not so much the poet, as his copier and commentator, that we have to correct. Dr. Johnson has said, though without a due consideration of circumstances, "It were to be wished that we all explained more and amended less." This is certainly desirable, and as it respects the *genuine* language of Shakspeare, it is a mode which should be pursued at all times; and it is here adopted, I am to hope, with success. But to attempt an interpretation of that which the transcriber, the printer, or the editor, has converted into nonsense, were a strange abuse of intellect indeed, and must infallibly be disgraceful to ourselves:—for how *explain* that which is wholly inexplicable as it stands? Nothing then is left for us but *to explain by conjecture;* and this, it should be remembered, can only be done by a particular attention to the context. But as it may even be thought by some, that *warrant* were necessary for this—that is, for an indulgence in conjectural criticism,—I shall bring forward the opinions, or rather *positions*, of certain writers, and which might deservedly be erected into laws. "That many passages have passed in a state of depravation, through all

the editions, is indubitably certain; of these the restoration is only to be attempted by collation of copies, or sagacity of conjecture. The collator's province is safe and easy; the conjecturer's, perilous and difficult. Yet as the greater part of the plays are extant only in one copy, the peril must not be avoided, nor the difficulty refused."

"That a conjectural critic should often be mistaken, cannot be wonderful, either to others or himself, if it be considered that in his art there is no system. His chance of error is renewed at every attempt. That is an unhappy state, in which danger is hid under pleasure. Conjecture has all the joy, and all the pride of invention; and he who has once started a happy change, is too much delighted to consider what objections may rise against it."—Such is the reasoning of Johnson. But if the change is "*happy*," what will the *objections* which may be raised against it, amount to? It should not be forgotten, however, that he shortly after proceeds in a different strain: "Yet conjectural criticism has been of great use in the learned world; nor is it my intention to depreciate a study, that has exercised so many mighty minds, from the revival of learning to our own age—from the Bishop of Aleria to English Bentley."

This, indeed, is highly just. Alteration may further be admitted on his own principle, when he says, "Since I have confined my imagination to the margin, it must not be considered as very reprehensible, if I have suffered it to play some freaks in its own dominion:"—"while the text remains uninjured, changes may be safely offered," &c.—*Johnson's Pref. to Shak.*

Shakspeare stands in precisely the same predicament as Quintus, the Smyrnean, of whom it has been well observed, "His poem is remarkable for having appeared in the successive editions which it has hitherto obtained, in a state of corruption which scarcely any other work of antiquity exhibits. It was first printed by Aldus from a very inaccurate MS.; and the succeeding editors have transmitted nearly all the errors of the original impression. Many of these, indeed, are little more than very obvious mistakes of transcribers, and may, in numerous instances, be corrected by the exercise of *conjectural criticism alone*, with a confidence little inferior to that which would be derived from the support of ancient MSS. This has accordingly been done by Rhodomannus, in his annotations on this poet, with distinguished success, and with a skill which proves his accurate and elegant knowledge of the ancient poetical diction."

What Bishop Louth has observed of conjecture, in regard to his translation of Isaiah, will apply sufficiently well to the text of Shakspeare. The words of the learned prelate are as follows: "If the translation should sometimes appear to be *merely conjectural*, I desire the reader to consider the *exigence of the case;* and to judge whether it is not better, in *a very obscure and doubtful passage*, to give something probable by way of supplement to the author's sense apparently defective, than to leave such passage altogether unintelligible." And Dr. Newcombe, in an introduction to his version of the minor prophets, has also said, "Of dark passages, or which exhibit no meaning as they stand, an *intelligible reading should be made on the principles of sound criticism.*"

I have already remarked on the necessity of conjectural criticism in the elucidation of our great Poet; and have to hope that the sentiments of the learned and ingenious writers whom I have thus cited, will bear me out in regard to it. That I have not wantonly exercised the privilege granted by them, must be acknowledged by every one acquainted with the writings which I would willingly expound. In a word, I am clearly of opinion, that we should, like Alexander, *cut* the knot which it is impossible to *untie*,

One great particular to be attended to in the exposition of Shakspeare, is, his frequent use of French and Italian words. But this source of explanation I shall here barely advert to; as I have, in several instances, had occasion to speak of it in the margin of the work.

The editor, Johnson, reprobates, and justly, the conduct of critics who speak scurrilously of each other; who rail at the "stupidity, negligence, ignorance, and *asinine* tastelessness, of the former editors," &c. But it is a wretched mistake to give to such men the appellation of *critic*. He who is really deserving of such honourable distinction, he who actually merits the "noble name," is of a totally different complexion. He will not attempt to condemn by *assertion* alone. He will not be content to say of the opinion he would dissent from, that "*it is ridiculous:*" if this be indeed the case, he will *prove* that such is its character. Scurrility, therefore, will amount to nothing. The "I am Sir Oracle"—the "So I pronounce of it," of the dogmatist, will at no time be admitted by those who have been accustomed to think and judge for themselves. But true criticism, like true poetry, seems to be little understood.

I have spoken somewhat largely of Dr. Warburton, but with respect to the other, and numerous editors, I have little to say. Their *industry* I can acknowledge without a pause. This their toil, it is true, and in the language of Pope, may well be called the dull duty of an editor: unfortunately, however, their labour, as far as it respects the language of the poet, has been not only *dull*, but useless; since the *dark passages are so invariably shunned by them.*—That Mr. Steevens has cleared up many obscurities, as they spring from the manners and customs of the time, I am by no means disposed to deny. In this particular, the world is certainly indebted to him; yet this, it should be remembered, he was enabled to do by the aid of books. But with regard to difficulties and intricacies in the sentiment or language, and in the disentanglement of which the principal merit of a commentator lies, he has little to boast. Indeed, for any interpretation of those expressions which I have termed *obscurities in the poet's fancy*, he had not the smallest talent. *Plodding abilities* he certainly possessed; and had he kept in mind the *ne sutor*, &c. all had been well; for it must be owned that such abilities, however *inferior*, are not unprofitable,—that is, (and as I have before observed,) in regard to the manners, &c. of the age. But unhappily for this critic, and still more unhappily for Shakspeare, he thought himself superior (will posterity believe it?) to almost every scholiast, ancient and modern: superior even to the great, the erudite Warburton! and at whom he has dared to sneer, after the example of that insipid versifier, Hayley,—whose account of the Bishop, by the way, is false and contemptible, and such as can only be disgraceful to himself.

Mr. Malone has said, in his preface, "The text is now settled." But it will be seen, I think, that this assertion has been much too hastily made; and that the present publication is by no means a work of supererogation, but necessary at once to the fame of the poet, and the country which gave him birth. It is not in the "multitude" of commentators, indeed, that "there is safety"—it is not from their *number* that perfection is to proceed;—yet, were particular apology required for what is here undertaken, it might be found in the following declaration of Dr. Johnson, and in which he *invites* to a fuller and nicer consideration of the text than that he had been able to give. "To time I have been obliged to resign many passages, *which, though I did not understand them, will, perhaps, hereafter be explained;* having, I hope, illustrated some, which others have neglected or mistaken, sometimes by short remarks or marginal directions, such as every editor has added at his will, and often by comments more laborious

than the matter will seem to deserve; but that which is most difficult is not always most important, and *to an editor nothing is a trifle by which his author is obscured.*"

I repeat, This *invitation*, as it may be called, of the critic, has influenced me greatly in regard to the work. Every passage in the plays, however uncouth the expression, and which the commentators have given up as "absolutely unintelligible" (*archaisms* are stubborn things), will here be found interpreted; and, as I should hope, to the satisfaction of the admirers of Shakspeare. As to other *difficulties*, they are various and many. Some proceed from the use of the grammatical figures, *aphæresis*, *syncope*, and *apocope;* and some from the punctuation; but the greater part, as I have already observed, arise from the carelessness of transcribers, printers, and editors.

Having delivered my sentiments with freedom, touching the qualifications of Mr. Steevens as an annotator (De mortuis nil nisi *verum*, is the maxim I shall always pursue), it might be expected that I should strike his *examples*, as he calls them, from the page. There is, however, a necessity that they should keep their place. It is highly expedient that he be confuted; that his errors be fully and particularly shown: for were not this to be done, his opinions, which have largely gone abroad, might at some future day be received by an injudicious editor, and even recommended by him to the notice of the world; so that the great poet of nature would be reduced nearly to a level with those whom he was born to instruct. The matter at issue, indeed, is this: Shakspeare must be sacrificed to Mr. Steevens, or Mr. Steevens to Shakspeare. Now this being clearly the case, how was it possible to hesitate, even for a moment, respecting it? And this must be my vindication in regard to the ridicule which I have sometimes thrown on this gentleman and his opinions. To attempt a serious confutal of him had been indeed absurd: *A fly is not to be broken on the wheel.* To sum up the matter in a word—an honest indignation has prompted me to the present censures. I have certainly spoken of this latter editor without reserve: there was, as will be seen in the course of the ensuing pages, an absolute necessity for it. Yet I have been guided invariably by justice and truth. In fine, I speak from no kind of prejudice whatever. If Warburton is held by me as the *best* (though much was left by him to be done), and Steevens as the *worst* of the poet's critics, it is not from any personal knowledge of either: they were known to me by nothing but their works. But if a further apology be necessary, I have only to say—It will always be pleasing to the ingenuous mind to acknowledge genius wherever it may be found; and also to defend it, not only against the attacks of envy and malevolence, but against that which might perhaps be still more prejudicial—the *feeble friendship* of such a commentator as him whom I have been forced to proscribe.

I think it unnecessary to remark particularly on the merits of the other commentators. My sentiments in regard to them will be seen in the following notes. It may not be improper, however, to observe, in a general way, that Warburton, by reason of his critical acumen, and of the taste and judgment so frequently found in his annotations, is entitled to the highest consideration as editor of Shakspeare. His pen may be said to have the power of that of the poet, since he has in many instances given to "airy nothing" (so considered from the expression not having been understood by those who had gone before him) an actual being, a "local habitation and a name:" although, as already hinted, he has left not a little for others to do; for it must in fairness be acknowledged, that the quickness of his conceptions have sometimes been fatal to that judgment of which he had so large a share; and he has much too hastily advanced opinions, and with

a dogmatical air, which, in his cooler moments, I am persuaded he must have been inclined to retract. But still the boldness of his conjectures, and which the tamer critic will consider as a fault, must by the lovers of nature and real genius be commended; since in no one instance can he be charged with *absurdity* or with inconsistency of any kind—an excellence, indeed, which those who immediately succeeded him have not to claim. All with him is uniformly grand and striking, and his *eccentricities*, if so they must be called, demand, and indeed extort, like to those of the "divinity" whose works he is considering, at once our admiration and respect. In a word, nothing appears laboured in him; the master-hand is discoverable in almost all: not but that we occasionally suspect him to have produced by a sort of impatient, yet happy dash of the pencil, that *foam* which is exhibited on his canvass, and which has been mistaken for the work of art.

It is not a little painful to observe on the disingenuousness of petty critics, who would deny to such a man as Warburton the claim of literary abilities. I will maintain, however, that those abilities were really *first-rate*, whether he be considered as a religionist and a philosopher (characters which, unhappily, are not always found together), a polemic, or a writer of notes; which latter employment, indeed, has been looked on contemptuously by those who, charmed by the "whistling of a name," had supposed that the scoff of the Twickenham bard was necessarily founded in truth. But at the fantastic and gibing expression alluded to ("the dull duty of an editor") Johnson has very properly manifested his indignation, and in the following words:—"This was a work" (the publication of Shakspeare's plays) "which Pope seems to have thought unworthy of his abilities, being not able to suppress his contempt of the *dull duty of an editor*. He understood but half his undertaking. The duty of a collator is, indeed, dull; yet, like other tedious tasks, it is very necessary: but an emendatory critic would ill discharge his duty without qualities very different from dulness. In perusing a corrupted piece, he must have before him all possibilities of meaning, with all possibilities of expression. Such must be his comprehension of thought, and such his copiousness of language. Out of many readings possible, he must be able to select that which best suits with the taste, opinions, and mode of language prevailing in every age, and with his author's particular cast of thought and turn of expression. Such must be his knowledge, and such his taste. Conjectural criticism demands more than humanity possesses; and he that exercises it with most praise, has very frequent need of indulgence. *Let us now be told no more of the dull duty of an editor.*"

This is all very just, though certainly not consistent with the undercited passage:—

"I could have written longer notes, for the art of writing notes is not of difficult attainment. The work is performed, first by railing at the stupidity, negligence, ignorance, and asinine tastelessness of former editors," &c.

Thus we find, in one page, that the business of a commentator is *far from easy*, and in another, that *nothing can be more so;* since he has only to rail at the "asinine tastelessness" of the editors who have preceded him. But this concluding assertion, and which I have before remarked on, is peevishly made. The "art of writing notes" is attained in a very different manner indeed! In a word, it may be said of Johnson, as I have had occasion to remark of Warburton, that *the latter end of his commonwealth forgets the beginning;* or that he would prove the truth of his propositions by something like the *reductio ad absurdum* of the schools.

It is for the honour of the nation to stand forward in the cause of Shak-

speare. "O Menander and Nature! which of you copied your pieces from the other's works?" Such is the memorable question of Aristophanes the grammarian. How well, then, may the same be asked of our immortal bard!

With respect to the emendations now proposed (which yet have cost me no little time and attention), I shall leave them, as already hinted, to the decision of the candid and the good: and only observe in conclusion, and with Tully, though on a different subject—*Ut potero, explicabo: nec tamen ut* PYTHIUS APOLLO, *certa ut sint et fixa quæ dixero; sed ut homullus probabilia conjectura sequens.* In other words—I shall hope, by unceasing industry, and a nice attention to the harmony of parts, to have exhibited the Poet with his native grace.

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